

INSIDE YOUR 5-SECTION PAPER

Christmas shopping: our mouth-watering 40 page guide

THE MAGAZINE



Frank **Skinner:** Watt a show at the power station THE EYE

Farewell Peter O'Sullevan. Hello **Bjorn Borg**

SPORT

TODAY'S NEWS

Second body 'lost' after Luxor massacre

A second body from a family of British victims of the Luxor terrorist attack had disappeared on its way home. A coroner admitted he had "no idea" what had happened to the body of Karina Turner. A body flown back to Halifax, West Yorkshire, had been believed to have been that of the 24-year-old air stewardess. But a West Yorkshire coroner, James Turnbull, said yesterday that dental records proved the body was not hers. He said it was possible that her body may already have been buried or cremated. It followed a similar mix-up earlier this week, when it emerged that the body identified as that of Ms Turner's mother, Joan Turner. was in fact that of a Swiss citizen. Her body has been located in Zurich. Yesterday Mr Turnbull described the situation as "total chaos" and said relatives were suffering "indescribable distress". Page 3

Class sizes are up again

Class sizes in state schools rose again last year to 18.6 per pupil, figures show, slightly up on the previous year and in stark contrast to the figure of 17.3 pupils per teacher 10 years ago. As the figures were released, the Government announced that it is to try to recruit more primary teachers, partly to help fulfil Labour's manifesto commitment to cut class sizes for five-, sixand seven-year-olds to 30 or below by 2002, a promise which, despine yesterday's bad news, it remains committed to. Page 8

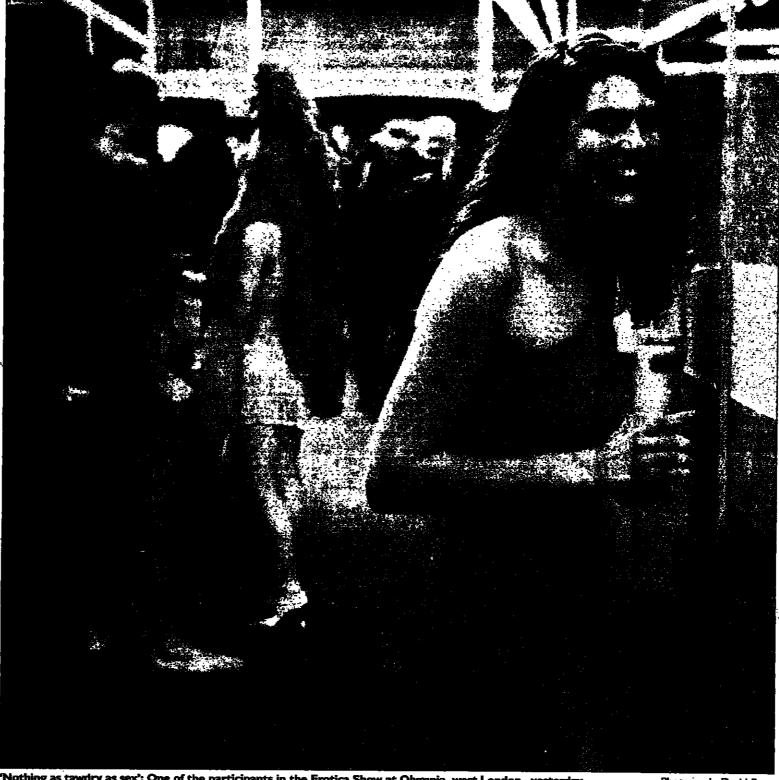
The Therapist of Oz

MGM, one of the world's biggest and best-known film studios, has asked a Hertfordshire therapist to endorse its classic children's film The Wizard of Oz. The psychotherapist, Bernie Wooder, says it "makes excellent viewing for responsible parents who are interested in the healthy emotional development of their children." He insisted yesterday: "This is not a gimmick", and gave examples of other films which had helped patients, including a depressed businessman who was convulsed with sobs when he saw Whoopi Goldberg in The Color Purple. Page 5



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CROSSWORDS Time Off, pages

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'Nothing as tawdry as sex': One of the participants in the Erotica Show at Olympia, west London, yesterday

Photograph: David Rose

Erotica show gives **Britain** a first

The Erotica show that opened at Olympia yesterday may not have been the Full Monty but it was certainly more than Britain had ever seen before.

"It's a first for this country," said organiser Brian Wiseman who insists the three-day affair is all about the erotic and nothing as tawdry as sex. Others, such as the woman from Surrender armoured clothing, agrees: "You know the fetish scene is becoming very mainstream these days. You see rubber in the High Street." Well, you certainly saw it yesterday at Olympia, as well as almost everything else. think England should loosen up a bit," said one 26-year-old. "We could use a little less fox-hunting and a little more of this." Mr Wiseman says that is his idea too and that Glasgow could be the next stop.

— Ann Treneman

After 500 years, MPs vote down foxhunting

A huge Commons majority of 260 for the Bill to ban foxhunting was hailed last night by the MP who is

sponsoring it as "a moral mandate" to get rid of the sport in Britain. Coin Brown, Chief Political

Correspondent, says Tony Blair privately gave MPs a clear signal there will be a change in the law before the next

The centuries-old tradition of foxhunting was facing extinction last night after the Commons voted by 411 to 151 to ban hunting with dogs. Foxhunting, which dates back 500 years but which began in its familiar form in the early 1800s, is unpopular among voters but has strong support in pockets of the country; and the battle is not yet over.

With the opposing camps digging in for a bloody parliamentary struggle; it could require the reform of another, even older, institution, the House of Lords, to make foxhunting illegal.

The MPs vote sets the House of Commons on a collision course with the House of Lords, where hundreds of Tory backwoodsmen and hereditary peers are expected to come to ish. "If the House of Lords wish-

the aid of the hunting lobby to es to take the House of Com- jubilant supporters outside the kill the Bill, promoted by the Labour backbencher Michael Foster, before it reaches the

Tony Blair was hundreds of miles away visiting British troops in Bosnia but he issued Labour MPs with a private note, emphasising his support for the Bill, and promising that it would be kept "open to review for the future" - a clear signal that the Government may not, after all, let it die. The Prime Minister has been under intense pressure from friends and allies on both sides of the argument; and earlier briefing had suggested the Bill would get little Government help.

statute book.

Now, though, ministerial sources confirm the options inchude using the Parliament Act to enforce the will of the Commons on the Lords after a delay of a year. A Cabinet member confirmed that another option would be to allow a backbench amendment to a future Home Office Bill on criminal justice to put an a ban on foxhunting on to the statute

The Home Office minister, George Howarth, who wound up the five-hour debate, warned the Lords that if they sought to frustrate the will of the Commons they would be hastening the end of the voting rights for the hereditary peers, which the Government is pledged to abolmons on over this issue, let them do so," said Mr Howarth.

The Government may have to take away the voting rights of the bereditary peers before pushing through a Bill which included a ban on foxhunting. The Government resisted

demands to give the Bill time to in this country, the days of ensure that it becomes law, but the Prime Minister told his backbench MPs: "I very much hope that opponents of the Bill would respect the will of the House and not seek to frustrate its passage by means of procedural delays.

"It is those in this House and in the Lords who seek to sabotage the Bill, not this Government, who will be preventing this private member's Bill reaching the statute book. We are keeping this matter open to review for the future."

being accused of breaking election promises over banning foxhunting, and Mr Foster was careful to stress that the Prime Minister had fulfilled the manifesto commitment to allow a free vote with yesterday's de-

The noisy and impassioned debate over the Bill crossed party lines. The highlight came when Labour MPs cheered and applauded a sparkling speech by Ann Widdecombe, the former Tory prisons minister, and a supporter of the Bill Given a hero's welcome by

Commons, some of whom were weeping with joy, Mr Foster said: "The size of the vote really indicates that this is going

to become law. "They will try (to sabotage it) but we have the moral mandate. The world now knows that hunting are doomed."

Tony Banks, the sports minister and the most outspoken supporter of the ban on foxhunting in the Government, told The Independent: "My feeling is that we will see the end of foxhunting during the course of this Parliament.

"This vote today and the expressions of support throughout the country will assist us in making sure that happens. I can well understand why on this occasion no guarantees (of Government time) can be given but this will Mr Blair is anxious to avoid give a clear steer to the Government this is something we have to do."

The Union of Country Sports Workers and Countryside Alliance, which had organised a vigil and meeting at the Queen Elizabeth conference centre, had prepared the 600 people attending for a defeat. Many were expecting a greater majority.

This was stressed by Labour peer Baroness Mallalieu, who told them: "It is the bad news we have been waiting for but it is not a bigger majority than we've had before."

Why Does Your

Memory

A WORLD-FAMOUS memory expert, who has trained industrialists, trades unionists, businessmen, professional men, salesmen, housewives and students to improve their memories, once said:

"Many people are embarrassed by a poor memory, and find difficulty in concentrating; whilst others realise that they lose business, academic and social opportunities not only because they cannot remember accurately everything they see, hear or read, but also because they cannot think or express their thoughts clearly, logically and concisely. Some seek advice, but many do not, mainly because they believe their memories cannot be

Simple Technique And yet, he went on to explain, he has devised a simple technique which can improve even the poorest memory. What's more, it can even work like magic to give you added poise, self-confi-dence and greater personal effectiveness. Everyone owes it to himself to find out more

Rapid Results According to this remarkable man, anyone — regard-less of his present skill could, in just 20 minutes a day, improve his memory

about this method.



get another appointment -ever! You could learn names faces, facts, figures and for eign languages faster than you ever thought possible You may be able to imprin whole books on your memor after a single reading. You could be more successful in your studies and examina R tions. At parties and dinner. you may never again be at a loss for supropriate words o entertaining stories. In fact you could even be more 🛢 poised and self-confident in everything you say and do.

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Forget names, faces?

Free

and concentration to a Concentration Studies (Depremarkable degree. For IDM67), FREEPOST 198 example, you need never for- Manchester M60 3DL.

The Fat Controller had a middle-aged spread, Thomas was most likely tanked up on lager, and the Flying Scotsman was probably speeding home to play with his train set.

We had always suspected that toys were not for the boys, but yesterday Hornby Railways confirmed it: For years they have been making train sets not for little lads, but for their fathers. The admission, which will make many a doting dad blush, was made

by the company yesterday when it also admitted targeting Scalextric at men and not their sons. Announcing its half-yearly results, the company said its marketing strat-

egy now involved aiming for serious enthusiasts with serious money - mature adults. They are the ones who can fork out on lengthy, complicated stretches of track, decorative stations and elaborate landscaping.

While the image of the toy railway (below) is still one of wide-eved youngsters in shorts and 1950s haircuts, the reality is quite different. The boys might get a look-in for five minutes, but they soon get elbowed out

Peter Newey, the company chairman, said most railway sets are no longer sold through toy shops but through model stores where adult modellers



"How do you define a toy?" he asked. "In the main they are bought ry mature men, not by children. They go to collectors or enthusiasts who out them into model layouts.

"Most of our sets are bought by men for their sons in anticipation of playing with them themselves, I am sure."

The models have changed as much as the marketing strategy. Nostalsic 14-year-old schoolboys can still buy the Flying Scotsman, but the most popular train is the Inter-City 125. And, in deference to privatisation, it 10w comes in the livery of Virgin and GNER.

Your Thatcherite realist is able to buy a gleaming model of the Euostar, although it is not clear whether the company makes slow stretchs of track for the imaginary British side and faster rails for the French

For serious anoraks, privatisation junkies or plain old sad purists, there re also models of suburban Networker carriages done out in the livery of local stretches like the Chiltern Line.

Scalextric, too, is being aimed at the more serious collector of longer, nore complicated sections of track. The models are produced with meticlous attention to detail - in all but one respect. The company would nevr carry tobacco advertising on its Formula One cars, not even for a £1m. ung from Bernie Ecclestone.

"Absolutely no way," said marketing manager Simon Kohler. "We stopped hat round about 1972 with the JPS [John Player Special] car. Last seaon, there were some cars carrying very subtle advertising, like an R with question mark for Rothmans. We wouldn't even do that. It's much too ear the mark."

It is the trains, however, that still cause the hearts of many a middleged man to miss a beat. And they are realistic in more ways than one; ney even reflect the financial ups and downs of life in the public transort private sector. Hornby's pre-tax profits fell from £1.1m a year ago to 973,000 in the half year to 30 September. Sales were down from £13.1m

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Business, page 26

PEOPLE





Anna Friel and Ewan McGregor, who will play Lisa and Nick Leeson in the forthcoming film

Trainspotting' star gets set to break the bank

Rogue Trader, the £8m feature film based on the rise and fall of futures trader Nick Leeson, has begun filming with Trainsporting star Ewan McGregor playing the man who brought down the world's oldest merchant bank,

The film, which will open early in 1999, is based on Leeson's best-selling autobiography of the same name. McGregor stars opposite Anna Friel as his wife Lisa in the movie charting his loss of £850m, which triggered the collapse of Barings Bank, his flight from justice and his six-year jail sentence.

The stars are said to have adopted "Essex-style" accents for their roles, and Friel has substituted her trademark long brunette hair for Lisa Leeson's short

The real-life couple wed in Kent but producers used Pembroke Lodge in Richmond Park, south-west London, for the scene in which the couple marry, which was shot this week.

Filming moved to Gatwick airport yesterday and stays in and around London until Christmas, when it moves to Malaysia and Singapore, where Leeson met his downfall.

Leeson, 29, ran up enormous trading losses at Borings Bank in Singapore, and finally fled. But he was arrested, returned to Singapore, and imprisoned.

Producer Paul Raphael said: "It is rollercoaster of a film about a streetwise guy who just got way out of his depth. Anyone can imagine themselves as Nick Leeson, and it contains classic dramatic elements,"

"Ewan is perfect for this part - it's the sort of role Gary Oldman could have played 10 years ago. He is a contemporary lad. Anna is going to be a huge star, she is tremendous."

Lisa and Nick Leeson married in 1992, but by February 1995 their relationship was plunged into disaster. Recent reports have suggested that Lisa

Leeson, 29, no longer visits her husband regularly. "Our story is romantic in many ways. If things had gone a little differently for Nick and Lisa they might be very happy and very rich by now," Mr Raphael

The rogue trader's decision to publish his autobiography caused concern that it would glamorise his crime. The possibility that the film might do the same did not appear to worry the producer. He expressed hope yesterday that a shorter sentence might ensure his presence at the opening.

"I hope we can get Nick along to the première it would be wonderful," Mr Raphael said.

— Jojo Moyes

Dying ex-serviceman denied right to sue MoD

An ex-serviceman suffering incurable lung cancer confracted after being exposed to asbestos dust as a Roval Navy engineer cannot claim compensation, three

Lawyers acting for Ronald Quinn had argued that to sue for damages and it was unjust that military personnel cannot. But Lord Justice Swinton Thomas said he "could see no reason" to change regulations barring servicemen from claiming against the Ministry of Defence for personal injury.

Mr Quinn, 65, of Holbeck, Leeds, who served from 1949 to 1956, is the first ex-serviceman to challenge whether the immunity clause of the Crown Proceedings Act applies to serving members of the forces who were exposed to asbestos dust. During his time with the Navy, he carried out service work on ships'

asbestos. He was forced to retire from work in 1979 and in 1982 was diagnosed as having malignant mesothelioma. He is now seriously ill.

The Crown Proceedings Act, covering damages civilian employees of the Ministry of Defence are able actions against the Crown, excludes members of the armed forces from claiming if it resulted from the condition of the "land, premises, ship, aircraft or vehi cles" supplied by the MoD. The appeal judges ruled that Mr Quinn suffered his injury "in consequence of the nature or condition of the ship" and therefore his action fails. They also threw out an alternative argument that there was an employment contract between Mr Quinn and the MoD, which had acted negligently.

Lawyers for Mr Quinn are to petition the House of Lords in an attempt to challenge the judgment.

UPDATE

HEALTH

Sex habits unchanged by fear of Aids

Four out of five sexually active adults in Britain say they worty about Aids to some degree - but less than one in five always practises safer sex, according to a survey.

Younger adults take the lead in safer sex while the over-40s mostly ignore the risks, the survey commissioned to mark World Aids Day on 1 December by Durex, the condom manufacturers, found.

Debbie Zadah, Durex brand manager, said: "People do seem to have heard the safer sex message but a very large proportion of them are not following any of the advice. Aids is a worldwide epidemic - no one can be really sure of a new partner's sexual history, and to have unprotected sex is an unnecessary risk to sexual health."

The survey found that more than nine out of ten people knew that HIV is a sexually transmitted infection but only a third were aware that chlamydia, which can lead to pelvic infection and infertility, is transmitted in the - Jeremy Laurance, Health Editor

ROYAL MAIL

Posting the seasonal message

Christmas cards travelling across the globe should be in the post by 6 December, the Royal Mail said yesterday.

Cards and letters being sent to addresses within Europe should be posted by 13 December to arrive before Christmas Day. Inland second-class



letters and cards should be sent by 18 December. For first-class mail the last posting date to be sure of pre-Christmas delivery in the UK is 21 December. The Royal Mail is expecting to handle more than two billion cards by 25 December. "The message, as always, is to post early and please remember to use the full address," said Royal Mail spokesman Mike Hilder.

HEALTH SERVICES

Mental hospitals provision slashed

The number of available beds in mental illness wards in National Health Service hospitals has dropped by almost 50,000 since 1980, it was revealed

The average daily number of beds available to treat the mentally ill has dropped from 87,396 to the 1996-97 figure of 37,624. The figures were revealed in a written answer to Simon Hughes, Liberal Democrat MP for Southwark and Bermondsey, from Paul Boateng, health minister with responsibility for mental health. The huge drop stems from the former gover ernment's policy of treating the mentally ill in the community, rather than in institutions. – Jojo Moyes

Grandparents sold short at Christmas

Grandparents get a rough deal when it comes to Christmas presents, according to figures published yesterday.

The average grandmother receives presents worth £20.66 from members of the family while granddad does even worse with an average of just £18.24. Compared to the average of £51 spent on other members of the family, older relatives are definitely doing the giving rather than the taking in the season of goodwill.

The survey, by Goldfish, the credit card company, showed that children under 12 were in for the best time at Christmas. On average, they receive £75 worth of presents from each of their parents.

Countess Spencer hits back at divorce case malice claims

Countess Spencer hit out vesterday the custody of our four small chilat claims that her divorce case against her husband was based on

She issued a statement through her solicitors which described as "untrue" claims made by David Horton-Fawkes, Earl Spencer's business manager, that she was using the divorce hearing to make malicious allegations and to

Mr Horton-Fawkes made his statement outside the High Court in Cape Town on Thursday. He said Lady Spencer "has been persuaded or advised to use this public forum and the protection of open court to make malicious and untrue allegations against Charles [the

earl| for financial gain". But in her statement, the countess said: "I simply wish to state in response to what is said by - or perhaps through - Mr Horton-Fawkes that it is in material respects quite untrue.

"My husband chose to sue me in South Africa for divorce and for

dren in South Africa, without warning, when we had been involved in negotiations through our English solicitors for many months, with a clear view to a divorce in England.

"My struggle before the Cape Town court is to have my future. and that of my children, determined by the law of the land where we were born and to which we shall re-

Earlier, one of the women with whom Lord Spencer is alleged to have had an affair leapt to the defence of the countess.

Sally Ann Lasson said of Mr Horton-Fawkes's attack: "Well, it's his [Lord Spencer's] little sidekick. in his anaemic !ackey way, trying to justify the fact that this man who has over £100m won't write a little, tiny cheque to his

"And then blaming the wife for going to court to get publicity. which is preposterous.

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Australia (dollars)	2.38	Italy (lira)	2,822
Austria (schillings) Belgium (francs)	20.15	Japan (yen)	2)].46
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by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



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Attempts to bring home the bodies of victims of an Egyptian tragedy descended into farce yesterday, with the revelation that a second body from a family of victims had disappeared. Esther Leach and Jojo Moyes report on the agony facing relatives.

ਂ ਨ੍ਹਾਂ _{ear} of Aids

The Foreign Office was yesterday urgently attempting to stop further funerals of the victims of the Luxor massacre, as a coroner admitted he had "no idea" what had happened to the tal chaos" and said relatives body of Karina Turner.

A body flown back to Hali- distress". "I find it very hard to fax, West Yorkshire, was believed to have been that of the 24-year-old air stewardess. But James Turnbull, the assistant deputy coroner for West Yorkshire, said yesterday that dental records proved the body was not Ms Turner's. He said it was possible that her body might already

bave been buried or cremated. It followed a similar mix-up earlier this week, when it emerged that the body identified as that of Ms Turner's mother, Mrs Joan Turner, was in fact that of a Swiss citizen. Her body has been located in Zurich. Yesterday Mr Turnbull described the situation as "to-

were suffering "indescribable

imagine the feelings of the Turner family ... I can't express deeply enough my concern and sympathy for them. I will move heaven and earth to get the body of Joan Turner back to this country and to locate that of Karina Turner." He added that he had known nothing like it in his

'Very urgent attempts are being made by the Foreign Office to prevent funerals of younger women until the body of Karina Turner is located." Ms Turner, her mother and

30-year service as a coroner.

her five-year-old daughter Shaunnah were all killed last week when militant Islamic visiting ancient monuments at

Luxor. Mr Turnbull said there was no doubt about the identification of the body of Shaunnah Turner. He added he had no idea of

the identification of the two bodies now under his care but that he would be investigating.

The funeral of all three members of the Turner family was to have taken place last Thursday at St Bartholomew's Church near their home in Ripponden, west Yorkshire.

Mr Turnbull said because of the international nature of the investigations, it could be weeks before relatives of the Turner family could lay their loved gunmen opened fire on tourists ones to rest. The Foreign Office for family sensitivities, most and a wallet which he said were said its first step would be to es-

body of Karina Turner, and added that the Swiss authorities had confirmed that the body of Joan Turner would be returned as soon as possible.

The mix-up over the bodies is deeply distressing for the families and embarrassing for the British and Egyptian authorities. But the authorities faced numerous difficulties in the immediate aftermath of the massacre. Initial identification was carried out by tour operators First Choice but it was not possible to cross-check with

the victims' passports. Although full details have not emerged because of concern victims suffered extensive in-

difficult. Mr Turnbull said the visual identification was carried out by families under very difficult circumstances. "I have said before that in the circumstances of this tragedy identification by these means is never easy and one must not offer any criticism either of the procedure or of the

identifying person." The Foreign Office is investigating reports that the bodies of a British couple killed in the massacre were looted before they were returned to Britain. A spokesman said that Paul Wigham, son of George, 69, and Ivy Wigham, 71 asked for help in locating items of jewellery not with his parents' bodies.

Buying a PC from Deli won't just save you trailing round the shops.

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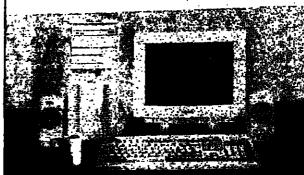
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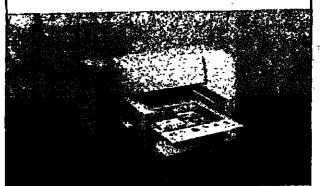
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Legal joint: the Dutch system of being allowed to use cannabis in 'coffee shops' has been called into question

Photograph: Hadj Jobard / Rex Features

In an attempt to deal with

house parties in which ecstasy

one to frisk people going into

the party - this is supposed to

weed out any dealers with

large numbers of tablets - it is

ecution usually only takes place

where significant amounts are

found. Once inside, experts are

on hand to provide instant test-

ing of the Ecstasy and advice on

what the tablet contains in an

Anyone caught will have

easy to smuggle in drugs.

Ecstasy threatens Dutch drugs strategy

For the past twenty years people have been able to eat, drink or smoke cannabis in 'coffee shops' in the Netherlands. But, as lason Bennetto discovered, a system designed to keep hard and soft drug users apart is under threat from an ecstasy epidemic. The solution may be to decriminalise possession of ecstasy.

The selection on offer was impressive. Dozens of tiny plastic bags containing such mind-blowing substances as Jamaica Gold, Zero Zero and Purple Haze were hung in neat rows like a supermarket spice rack. Below in plastic strawberry containers, for your convenience, were ready-rolled joints of cannabis and powerboasted "official junk dealer". The audience was equally hashish - or the dried hemp "weed".

impressive. Among the cussmell of dope was a senior police officer, a government prosecutor, and council official wearing dark suits and fixed

amiles. The visit to Gerard Smit's friendly coffee shop, Creamers in The Hague, which might which cost as little as about \$3.50. The more accurately be called a drug should be consumed, either smoked

drugs bar, was the Dutch gov- system. ernment's attempt at clarifying their much-maligned drugs

By British standards the Dutch not only think the unthinkable, they actually carry it out. More unusually they are. which unlike ecstasy is addichonest enough to admit their tive. failures and compromises.

For many years their system of licensed "coffee bars" where punters can buy and use very small amounts of cannabis without fear of police harassment has keep soft drug consumers away from dealers of hard narcotics. But the rise in popularity of ecstasy with tens of thousands of Dutch youths, using the dance drug and new "eco-substances" such as magic mushrooms has undermined that policy and called into

In a further twist a recent police clampdown against ecstasy producers has resulted in traffickers mixing the drug with other substances, includ-

The Dutch have long prided themselves on their progressive approach to drugs. They argue that although they

have a more liberal attitude to cannabis use in the Netherlands is low compared to othparticularly Britain. They also average age is now 36 - because

But the popularity of Ecstasy among the country's 15 million population is blurring the differences between hard and soft drug users. Up to 500,000 people in the Nethering amphetamines (Speed) lands are estimated to have taken Ecstasy, although only six are believed to have died from the side effects.

The Netherlands is the centre for ecstasy production in Europe with Britain being one illegal substances the rate of of its major clients. New laws have been introduced which enable the authorities to coner European countries, vict drug manufacturers caught with just the ingredients rather have a relatively low level of than the finished product. But Mental Health Care in Ams-HIV sufferers, drug deaths, and the government admits it is terdam is equally pessimistic, heroin addicts who are be- struggling to prevent young describing the availability of eccoming increasingly old - the people using the drug and therefore risking contact with officials are concerned at the

caine, speed and heroin. New into ecstasy tablets to bulk "eco drug" shops have also them out. started to spring up selling natural highs such as mushthis problem the Dutch have rooms and vitamins. come up with a typically schiz-Bob Keizer, head of the Deophrenic policy. While classi-

partment of Addiction Care at fying ecstasy as a Class A hard the Dutch Ministry of Health drug, they have allowed local yesterday questioned whether authorities to licence large the government could continue to maintain "the old-fash- is taken. While there is someioned approach of separating the two (soft and hard drug) markets." He added: "We realise we can't go on forever with this policy if we do not do anything about ecstasy."

Jaap Fransman, director of their tablets confiscated, Prosthe Division of Youth and stasy as an "epidemic". Health

question the entire coffee shop there are so few new young re- other substances such as co- variety of substances being cut attempt to spot dangerous concoctions. Once diagnosed the tablet is returned to its owner. The Dutch authorities are now having to rethink their policy on ecstasy and are considering whether, like cannabis, it

should be decriminalised in small quantities. Meanwhile back at the Creamer coffee shop the owner, Mr Smit, believes the rest of the world is missing out on the Dutch experience. He explains: "Bill Clinton was about 500 metres from here the other day when he visited the Royal Palace. People were in here smoking joints having a good time." Unlike the American

The coffee-shop highs for a low country

ful "skunk weed". The label on THERE are about 1,200 so-called coffee the wooden drugs cabinet shops in the Netherlands where customers are able openly to buy cannabis resin -

Technically it is illegal to buy or sell any tomers bathed in the sweet cannabis, but Dutch authorities turn a blind eye to anyone using small quantities of the drug in licensed coffee shops providing they obey certain rules.

Only people aged 18 or above can go into the premises and buy cannabis. They can only purchase five grams a day enough for about 15 cannabis cigarettes -

with tobacco, dissolved in coffee or eaten baked in a cake, on the premises, although this is often ignored and there is nothing to stop people going to several shops in a single day. Drug-users are offered a wide range of cannabis products from around the world including ready-made joints and the super-strong Dutch weed called skunk. Prices are listed on a menu board.

Anyone caught on the street with a small amount of cannabis will not be prosecuted. The shop owners must only keep 500 grams on the premises and are not allowed to advertise. Following complaints about anti-social behaviour and fears that

they were becoming too numerous, the number of shops which are based in bars and cafes have been reduced by about 15 per cent since 1995 with about 350 in Amsterdam. The quantity that individuals can buy was also reduced from 30 grams. It is illegal for owners to buy cannabis from traffickers, however this has also been in effect decriminalised, with the police usually ignoring sales from professional dealers, amateurs who have grown it at home, and backnackers. The coffee shop owners have their own union and most must decide by 2000 whether to sell either alcohol or drugs but not both.

President, they did inhale.



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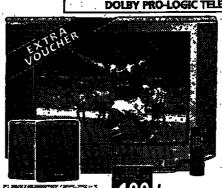
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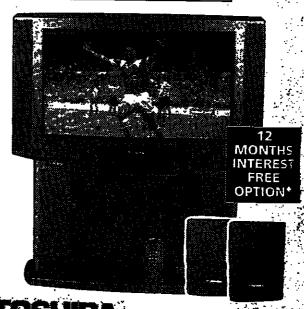
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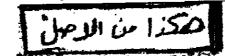
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MJOIK

National in clean sweep of awards

Former National Theatre director Sir Richard Eyre won two accolades and saw his company carry off the main prizes at yesterday's Evening

Standard Drama Awards. David Lister, Arts News Editor, watched another moment of triumph for Sir Richard.

It was the biggest clean sweep in the 42-year history of

Sir Richard Eyre was presented with a special award by performers. actor Paul Scofield for the decade of his directorship, 1988-1997, and was also named best director for his productions of King Lear and The Invention ny in which the National featured strongly.

Ian Holm was named best actor for his National Theatre tricia Rothermere Award, cre-King Lear, and Tom Stoppard collected the best play trophy for The Invention of Love.

best comedy award for Closer another NT production - and the award for best musical went to Lady In the Dark by Kurt Weill, Ira Gershwin and Moss Hart, which was staged at the National.

A highlight of the awards ceremony came when Dame Maggie Smith presented the best actress award Eileen Atkins for her performance in A Delicate Balance at the Haymarket Theatre, where she costars with Dame Maggie. Ridiculing a report that the two of them were not speaking, Dame Maggie recalled how they had known each other since their youth, and had de- screened next year.

liberately sought a play to act in together. Such rumours were, she suggested, a hazard for actresses. "No one ever says, 'ooh have you heard Othello's not getting on with lago," she ob-

While the awards ceremony had its usual upbeat atmosphere, much of the talk among the actors and actresses attending was about the current Equity strike in which many of them are involved. Union members are refusing to do voice overs and other commercials for television following a decision by the Institute of Practioners in Advertising to reduce drastically repeat fees, cutting substantial earnings for many

The award for most promising playwright went to Conor McPherson for The Weir, staged by the Royal court.

Jonathan Harmsworth, son of Love at an awards ceremo- of Lord Rothermere, chairman of The Daily Mail and General Trust, publishers of the Evening Standard, introduced The Paated by Lord Rothermere in memory of his first wife.

It is a two-part award. The Patrick Marber took the first part went to Dame Judi Dench in recognition of her services to theatre. The second, a scholarship allowing a drama student to take his or her place at drama school when they had no other funding, was won by 23-year-old Mark Rice-Oxley from Liverpool

Ned Sherrin hosted the ceremony at The Savoy Hotel, central London.

Sir Richard Evre's King Lear is to be filmed for BBC2's Performance programme. The three-week shoot, with Ian Holm as King Lear and most of the Royal National Theatre production cast unchanged, starts on Monday. It will be

How a slice of Hollywood's feelgood factor helps cure the soul



Reel benefit: Bernie Wooder, a psychotherapist, says The Wizard Of Oz, can help children: 'It is a wonderful film because it shows that by being open and friendly to yourself and others, life can be happier'

The Wizard of Oz is therapeutic for children; Rebecca is prescribed for ailing marriages. Pretty Woman can help a girl with boyfriend problems. David Lister talks to Britain's first film therapist.

MGM, one of the world's biggest and best-known film studios, has asked a Hertfordshire therapist to endorse its classic children's film The Wizard Of Oz.

When the studio releases the film, digitally remastered on video this Christmas, it will come complete with a bill of health from the psychotherapist Bernie Wooder. MGM announced yesterday that Mr Wooder thinks The Wizard Of Oz "makes excellent viewing for responsible parents who are interested in the healthy emotional development of their children".

It is the first time a studio has commissioned a psychotherapist, Britain's only film therapist, to endorse a film.

The report Mr Wooder sent to MGM, entitled "The Wizard Of Oz: As Seen From A Therapeutic Perspective", breaks down the Judy Garland film scene by scene and concludes that the cast is bursting with role models for children. In Mr Wooder's words,

"The Wizard Of Oz is a wonderful film because it shows that by being open and friendly to yourself and others, life can be happier ... They [the characters] are helpful role models for identifying those different parts of ourselves which are similar to these characters, ie woolly headed and unintelligent (Scarecrow), mechanical and going through the motions (Tin Man) and tense and frightened (Lion). It also portrays love and sharing ed to putting out films that will in a joint quest."

At his clinic in Borehamwood near the old film studios spective of viewing films and Photograph: London Features at Elstree, Mr Wooder, 57, who videos in a healing way."

is registered with the UK Council of Therapists, described yesterday how his love of films and use of them in treating depression and other problems, had changed his pa-

"This is not a gimmick," he said. "I'm sure everyone can think of a film that has moved them in some way. It's the sense of why and where it has moved you which is the springboard from where we start.

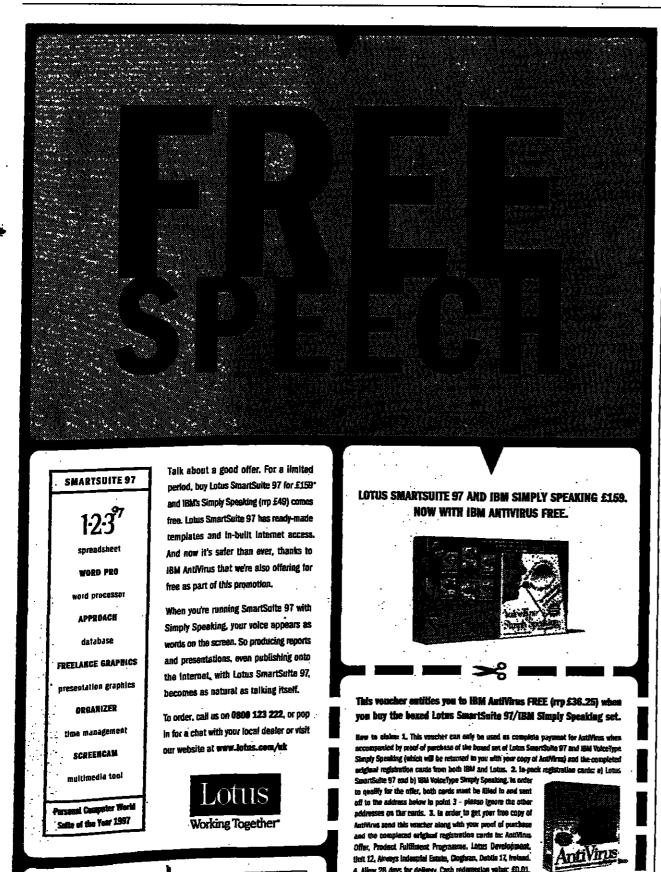
"For example, I was working with someone who wanted commitment from her boyfriend and couldn't get it, and she wasn't going to shortchange herself. I got her to see the film Pretty Woman where Julia Roberts says: 'I want the full commitment, I want the fairy tale.' She saw it over and over again.

"Then there was a businessman who came to me quite depressed. He was a workaholic, but every time heachieved a project it lost its original promise. It dated from his parents pushing him when he was young. I told him to see The Color Purple, the scene where Whoopi Goldberg is acknowledged publicly for who she was, a human being. That kind of acknowledgment was what he needed. He went to see it eight times and was convulsed with sobs. His energies were refocused. It changed his life."

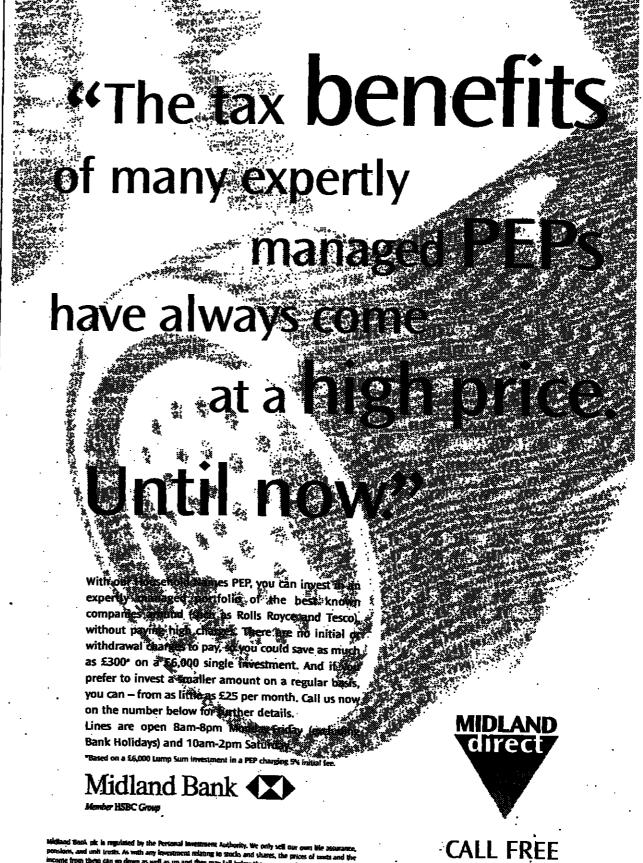
Films that Mr Wooder particularly recommends for their therapeutic values include: It's A Wonderful Life with James Stewart, "brilliant for self-esteem"; Rebecca, "I recommend couples in second marriages who are having problems with one person feeling haunted by the shadow of a previous partner, to watch it together. It's a very good aid to communication".

Mr Wooder is now trying to persuade MGM to set up a "social concern division", devothelp people. He said: "My mission is to get the whole per-

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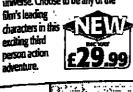


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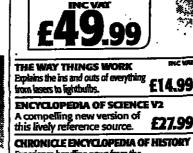
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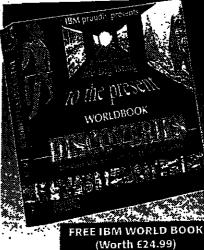






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PRUCEFIELD

Doctors sceptical over £200 gadget to make baby brainy



Birth control: The development of BabyPlus reflects a national obsession with the health quick fix Photograph: Colorific

You strap it to your waist for the last 16 weeks of pregnancy and it gives you a brainier baby. Or so the manufacturers claim. Jeremy Lourance, Health Editor, looks at how ambitious mothers and their money are soon parted.

It is a gadget like a Walkman and it plays knocking and whooshing sounds through your expanding abdomen which are said to stimulate your baby's mental development.

The sounds mimic the mother's heart beat and it is the subtle differences between these and the real thing that are believed to arouse the baby's curiosity and keep its brain cells developing.

But the BabyPlus, which is made in the US, does not come cheap. At £202.50 it would pay for a lot of nappies and reflects a national obsession with the health quick fix. Medical experts remain sceptical.

Sue Taylor, head of BabyPlus in the UK. said 6,000 had been sold over the past three years. "It kick starts the thinking process. I used it with my fourth child and the improvement in his attention span compared with the others is the most exciting

Developed by US psychologist, Brent Logan, the theory is that by stimulating the baby's brain, the device causes more nerve connections to be laid down so that the brain cells do not die off at birth. Around



BabyPlus: The device plays sounds which mimic the mother's heartbeat

40 per cent of brain cells are said to perish because they fail to connect to other

Babies born after use of the device are said to be more supple, more alert, with better muscle and head control. The gadget is especially popular in the Par East and a large research study is underway in India and Russia.

Ms Taylor said: "I wish it was much cheaper but that is just the way it works.

It was expensive to develop and there are just not enough mothers wearing it. There are also royalties to be paid to Dr Logan."

Dr Sarah Brewer, a GP who is writing a book on pre-natal stimulation, said most people were sceptical of its benefits until they saw the results. "My son's eyes were open when he was born and he had excellent head control. A lot of this is anecdotal and we are just at the stage where the evidence is coming in but there is enough for me to feel there is a benefit there. It is about trying to give your baby the best possible start in life

Obstetricians say there is clear evidence that babies respond to stimulation in the womb and that, once born, a baby that is left unstimulated will not develop. There is no evidence, however, that playing sounds to the baby before birth in the womb s beneficial.

Dr John Friend, spokesman for the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists said: "Diet and environment whether the mother drinks or smokes - are likely to be more important for the baby's development than this device. It is probably not worth the money.'

Parents' anxiety about their offspring make them ready consumers of new ideas. A missionary in China trying to earn his fare home claimed to have invented a medicine that would produce a baby boy. The potion came with a money-back guarantee if it failed. The canny inventor only had to return half the money - and got rich.

Infection rate in NHS hospitals is 10 times that in private sector

Up to one in ten NHS patients now acquires an infection while in hospital. Roger Dobson examines the possible causes.

The pressure on beds in the wake of the National Health Service reforms may be one reason for a rise in the number of patients being infected in hospitals. according to specialists giving evidence to a House of Lords committee investigating the rise in resistance to antibiotics.

So-called hot-bedding, where the same bed could be occupied trol of methicillin-resistant by different people in a 24-hour

beds and the necessity for mixedspecialty wards, are very difficult circumstances in which to conduct infection control," said Professor Mark Casewell of King's College School of Medicine and Dentistry in London, who is one of Britain's foremost experts on

Patients occupying hospital beds are also more likely to be sicker and thus more open to infection than they used to be because of the rise in day surgery, which means less-serious cases no longer need accommodation.

hospital infection control.

New guidelines on the constaphylococcus aureus (MRSA),

that hot-bedding, the pressure on from some of our hospitals," says Professor Casewell in his submission to the committee. He says this inability is "unique

and unnerving".

An article in the British Medical Journal says the latest estimates are that 10 per cent of hospital patients will acquire an infection. The private health insurers Bupa says the infection rate in their hospitals, which have small wards and more side rooms, is less than 1 per cent.

In the report, consultant microbiologist Dr Keith Barker says there are a number of problems facing infection-control doctors: "The new NHS requires rapid turnover of patients and operperiod, may be one of the main one of the most dangerous in- ates under considerable financial not controlling MRSA will be a causes leading to an infection fections, are being finalised pressure. Patients are sicker and strong resistance to all antibirate 10 times that in the private and are expected to warn that more vulnerable to hospital-ac- otics: "In Tokyo we already sector. Some specialists believe more money is needed to quired infection. They are slot- have a hint of this with an orisolation wards are now need- counter the problem. "It has ted into any bed and there are ganism that is halfway up the proved impossible to eliminate insufficient ... side rooms in scale to being resistant to the last "There is a strong view now one of these MRSA strains which to isolate patients."

He adds: "Levels of basic cleanliness and the general fabric of clinical areas can be poor ... In essence, the new mangement of the NHS negates ef-

fective infection control." An emerging threat is that several organisms are increasingly resistant to antibiotics and Professor Casewell, in his submission to the Lords' committee, says: "The requirement for isolation wards for MRSA, as well as other transmissible infections, has never been greater but senior management and health ministers have yet to be

of this investment." He says the ultimate costs of

persuaded of the costs benefits

FAXING

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Machines win by a Lower classes born to nose in taste game life of poorer health

placed by electronic ones, as the foods face a constant struggle Agriculture Minister, Dr Jack when trying to develop "low fat" Cunningham discovered yes- or "low calorie" products by meterday. Scientists at the Uni- chanical means. This is because versity of Nottingham are taking out fat generally means developing an electronic "taste" taking out "taste": fats absorb bud", which will be used to de- and hold the complex aromatvelop food with more flavour by ic compounds that we perceive analysing the aromas that form as taste, and contribute strongin our noses when we eat meals. ly to the sensation that profes-

saw the machine as he opened the university's new £2.2m Food Science building. The "electronic taster" is being developed as part of a three-year project in which the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food is uate the aromas in different investing £120,000, half of the chewed-up foods, and espetotal funding.

The aim of the project is to build a machine that the food the present testing regime that industry can use to develop new food products undergo, new products. Whereas natural foods achieve their balance of taste, "mouth feel" and nutrition through their genes,

Yesterday Dr Cunningham sional tasters describe as "mouth feel" once we start

chewing something. But the trouble with tasters is that their sense of taste varies and unemployment. from day to day. An electronic "nose" that can precisely evalcially in experimental ones, would be a valuable addition to though humans would still be

essential in the final stage before a food reached the shops. Charles Arthur, Science Editor

Human tasters could soon be re-manufacturers of processed Social class has a powerful influence on whether people grow up healthy or are beset by ill-

> A follow up of 11,407 people born in England, Scotland and Wales in 1958 revealed strong links between social origin and a broad spectrum of health risk factors. These included birthweight and height, household overcrowding, smoking and diet, breastfeeding, di-

ness, a study over 33 years has

With only a few exceptions there were "strong significant trends" of increasing adverse

The researchers, Dr Chris Power and Sharon Matthews of risk increased from the highest the Institute of Child Health, to the lowest class of origin. London, gathered information from participants in the study from birth up to the age of 33. They also obtained data from

parents, teachers and doctors. Writing in The Lancet they concluded: "An individual's chance of encountering multiple adverse health risks throughout life is influenced powerfully by social position.

"Social trends in adult-dis-

ease risk factors do not emerge exclusively in mid-life but accumulate over decades." The trend towards greater risk with lower social class was especially strong for general

sickness, respiratory symptoms and psychological distress in both men and women. Key factors included maternal and passive smoking,

own smoking habits, and low consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables. For each of these

The authors suggested that pre-school care and education could play an important role in



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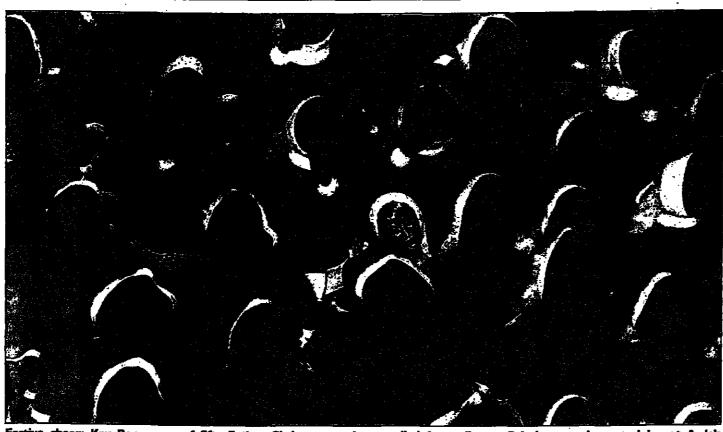
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Two men who profited by registering Internet "domain names", the essential part of website and e-mail addresses, belonging to trading giants including Sainsbury's and the Virgin group, were facing ruin yesterday. They were ordered to pay £65,000 court costs after being banned by the High Court yesterday from infringing trademarks and "passing-off".

Richard Conway and Julian Nicholson had specialised in registering domain names such as "ladbrokes.com", "marksandspencer.com" - and even "spicegirls.net" and "buckinghampalace.org" without the consent of the owners of the trademarks. They then wrote to the owners offering them for sale. But Deputy Judge Jonathan Sumption QC ordered them to pay £65,000 of legal costs after BT, Marks & Spencer, Ladbrokes, J Sainsbury and Virgin Enterprises brought an action against the duo, who had claimed that their activity was like collecting novelty postcards.

The judge also instructed the men to take steps to have the disputed names assigned to the companies. He said the men's activities "followed over a substantial period of time... are plainly intended to deceive." - Charles Arthur, Science Edi-



Festive cheer: Kay Berry, one of fifty Father Christmases who travelled from all over Britain to undergo training at Asda's headquarters in Leeds yesterday. They will work in the stores over the festive period Photograph: Tim Smith

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Government feels the heat on class sizes

The Government was yesterday warned of 'storm clouds gathering'. around its pledge to cut infant classes to 30 pupils as new figures revealed class sizes rose again last year. Lucy Ward, Education Correspondent, finds ministers insisting the promise will be honoured. "

Pressure on the government to succeed in its drive to recruit more new teachers was underlined yesterday as statistics showed the number of pupils per teacher in state schools in England rose in 1996 to 18.6.

The number is up from 18.5 pupils per teacher the previous year, and 17.3 pupils per teacher 10 years ago.

As the figures were released, the Government announced it is to raise the provisional recruitment target for primary teaching courses for next academic year by 450 trainees to 11,500. The increase is designed to meet expected need for more primary teachers in order to fulfil the Government's manifesto commitment to cut class sizes for five-, six- and seven-year-olds to 30 or below by 2002.

There are now almost half a million infant pupils in oversized classes – approaching a quarter of all pupils in the age group -

compared with 440,000 in 1996. The school standards minsaid the Government was still on target to deliver its pledge on class sizes, beginning next September with £22m released through the phasing out of the assisted places scheme. That money, expected to pay for an extra 1,000 teachers, will be followed by a further £100m the following year.

Teachers' leaders and the Liberal Democrat education spokesman Don Foster acknowledged the class-size rise figures were the legacy of the previous government, but said more remedial action was needed. Mr Foster claimed the Goverament risked failing to meet its pledge on class sizes unless it took more robust and urgent action. "The storm clouds are gathering," he warned, claiming the Government was caught in "a pincer movement" with too little money to cut class sizes and too few willing recruits for

teacher training. The looming crisis in teacher supply was highlighted earlier this month when it emerged Tony Blair had brought in Alec Reed, the head of Britain's biggest employment agency, to seek out ways to tackle the

At the same time, shortly after the launch of a £10m recruitment drive by the Teacher Training Agency, the Commons education select committee pointed to an 11 per cent drop in the number of undergraduates studying teaching, and warned failure to tackle the crisis could jeopardise the Government's ister Stephen Byers yesterday drive to raise standards.

Publicly funded pupil loses place at top private school

A 14-year-old girl accused of poor work and causing fear among other pupils through bullying and intimidation yesterday lost her publicly funded place at a girls' private school.

The High Court refused to order £12.300-a-year Cobham Hall, Kent, to take her back - even though her place was withdrawn and given to another girl unlawfully.

Mr Justice Dyson said it had been a "difficult" decision. But t would be wrong to order the school to educate G, who cannot be named for legal reasons, at its own expense when she was no longer wanted and teachers claimed the move could prove "disastrous" for the school and G herself.

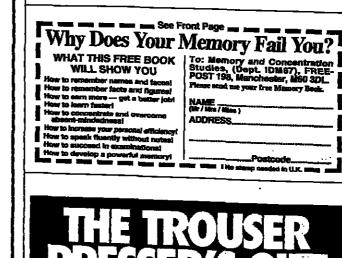
Abortion victory for girl, 13

A judge's decision allowing a 13-year-old pregnant rape victim to travel to Britain from Ireland for an abortion has been upheld after a legal challenge by the girl's parents, supported by pro-life groups. The Dublin High Court decided not to overrule an earlier ruling in the Children's Court. It was unclear last night if there will be a further appeal to the Supreme Court early next week or if the girl would travel immediately to Britain.

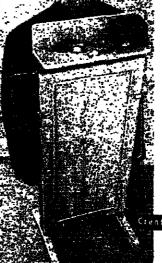
Animal group wins test case

The UK's leading anti-vivisection group yesterday won a test case to prevent an animal laboratory firm using anti-stalking legislation to curb its protests.

The British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV) had asked the High Court in London to remove its name from a restraining injunction served on it by Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS), which has animal testing laboratories in Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Cheshire.







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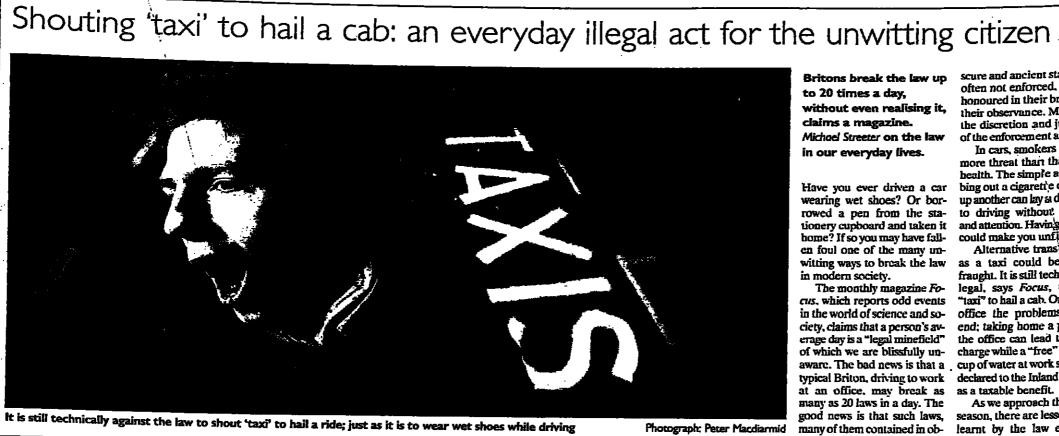
Police forces are increasingly adly gay and lesbian officers. vertising in the gay and lesbian "That will change the canteen media to attract a wider variety culture of our forces."

of recruits, it was revealed yes-The organisation backed a Paul Fairweather, from the speech by Home Office Minister Alun Michael, the first gov-National Advisory Group -Policing Lesbian and Gay Com-ernment minister to attend such munities, said so far the policy a conference, who acknowledged the need to build bridges was limited to areas where their with the gay community. "I were well-known gay commurecognise that lack of trust in the nities, such as Sussex and Manpolice has resulted in serious unchester. "In the long ("m we derreporting of homophobic hope it will become a matter of attacks and a feeling that people's lifestyles - rather than the Mr Fairweather, who was crimes are under investigation," speaking during the group's

However, there were some good examples of police practice around the country where there has been good "dialogue" between the police and gay communities, he said.

"The Government is also playing its part. Legislation is now in place to ensure people do not have to suffer a campaign of harassment, and it can be used for the protection of leshians and gay men.

9/THE LAW



Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

Britons break the law up to 20 times a day. without even realising it, claims a magazine. Michael Streeter on the law

in our everyday lives. Have you ever driven a car wearing wet shoes? Or borrowed a pen from the stationery cupboard and taken it

witting ways to break the law in modern society. The monthly magazine Focus, which reports odd events ciety, claims that a person's average day is a "legal minefield" of which we are blissfully unat an office, may break as many as 20 laws in a day. The

many of them contained in ob-

aware. The bad news is that a cup of water at work should be typical Briton, driving to work declared to the Inland Revenue as a taxable benefit. As we approach the festive good news is that such laws,

scure and ancient statutes, are often not enforced, and more honoured in their breach than their observance. Many are at the discretion and judgement of the enforcement authorities. In cars, smokers are under

more threat than that to their health. The simple act of stubbing out a cigarett'e or lighting up another can lay a driver open to driving without due care and attention. Having wet shoes could make you unfit to drive.

Alternative transport such as a taxi could be equally fraught. It is still technically illegal, says Focus, to shout "taxi" to hail a cab. Once at the in the world of science and so- office the problems do not end; taking home a pen from the office can lead to a theft charge while a "free" coffee or

> season, there are lessons to be: learnt by the law enforcers

statute, apparently still unlawful for the police and other emergency services to work on Christmas Day, while even more oddly serving more than three courses for Christmas dinner is also against an old law.

The further back the laws. the more strange they seem. Any butcher found guilty of selling bad meat can still be put in the pillory for a day, and it is still illegal for a salesman to try to sell anything to a woman

on a Sunday. Focus editor Paul Colbert said many of the laws came from attempts to control small sections of society, the rules quickly becoming outdated.

"The nation's lawmakers need to wake up," he said. "It's still illegal to beat your wife after 9pm because of the noise or to make love on the steps of a church after sundown. I suppose it's allowed in broad day-

THERE'S A

NEAR YOU.

SOLUTH EAST

Irvine calls for more black judges

The Lord Chancellor is announcing measures to encourage more blacks and Asians in the judiciary. He also promises to deal personally with any allegations of discrimination. Michael to ten years experience. Streeter, Legal Affairs Correspondent, says such an initiative is badly

The bare statistics in Lord Irvine of Lairg's speech to eth- made on merit," he says. "But I nic minority lawyers this morn- am determined to break downing tell their own story. Only one any culture of not applying beper cent of circuit judges are not — cause 'they'd never have the likes white, and 1.5 per cent of of me'." Lord Irvine also makes recorders. Among the senior a personal promise to investigate ranks of the judiciary there are any discrimination and invites no black judges at all. This morning at the Minor-

ity Lawyers Conference, Lord Irvine will announce plans to en- personal reply." courage more lawyers from the ethnic minorities to consider applying for careers as judges. One idea is a so-called "shadowing" scheme whereby young lawyers will be able to sit with Master" judges. The lack of experienced judges and gain an idea of the work involved.

Lord Chancellor is for a "mentoring" scheme where judges would be asked to advise and guide junior colleagues in the part-time judiciary. "I hope that increasing contact between serving judges of measures from a Lord Chan-

Police turn to gay

and candidates for judicial of- cellor to change the overfice, especially from the ethnic whelmingly white, middle-class minorities, will help to break and male ethos of the judiciary. down some of the barriers which are perceived to stand between the individual and the sultation between officials and Bench," Lord Irvine says today. other judges on assessing like-One problem is the lack of by talent for the beach.

black and Asian lawyers among the more senior barristers from where most judges are drawn. Only 1 per cent of barristers who have been qualified for more than 15 years are from ethnic minorities. The good news, says Lord Irvine, is that this figure rises to 8.3 per cent among barristers with five

He also reveals that he has instructed civil servants to provide more help for anyone considering a career as a judge. He will tell the lawyers: "I encourage you to use them. I will not be scattering promotions around like confetti - appointments must be people to write to him. "I undertake to look at the case personally and provide you with a

At the same time the Lord Chancellor is proposing a new system of on-the-job assessment for new part-time jobs by experienced so-called "Pupil such assessment is a weakness in the selection procedure of Another proposal by the full-time judges, he believes.

His speech is likely to be welcomed by many who complain about the lack of black representation on judicial benches, though critics will point out that it will take more than a handful

Lord Irvine says he will keep







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It was drizzling yesterday out- Olympia on this wet and rainy side the Erotica exhibit at Friday. "We want to see lots of Olympia but it was hard to find even one man wearing a raincoat. Purple boas and codpieces, yes. Leather, yes, lots of want to see Shagnasty and But very few raincoats indeed. sleazeballs but most of the dirty raincoats will stay at home," said Erotica organiser from a bottle of Möet, and Brian Wiseman. "That type of man is easily frightened."

BY ANN TRENEMAN

suit and a grey shirt with a pin on his lapel that says "Head Boy". This exhibit - the first of its kind in Britain - was his idea. "This is erotic, this is not sex," he insists as women prance rious about among the 84 stalls around the catwalk. "It is not sleazy because I'm not a sleazy person." So no nudity then?

"Just tops. No naked genitals." I'm not sure if this is going to be enough for Gavin Wager and Andrew Ferguson, who were first in line yesterday when the doors opened at

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women dancing around with no clothes on," said Andrew, who is is a stock controller. "We it and a bit of silver lame too. Mutley too," said Gavin. This, as it turns out, is a video about "Inevitably we will get a few two lecherous guys who always get their girls.

I spot them later, swigging wonder how they'll be by the time the raffle is drawn at Brian was wearing a black 10pm. They might like the first prize, which is a huge hamper of sex toys including a 13 inch dildo and something called a nipple super-sucker. "It's worth £250 in all," said the raffle man

> Six thousand people had booked tickets for yesterday's exhibit which runs until Sunday. and a further 2,000 were expected yesterday at the door. Most visitors said they had made the trip for curiosity's sake and there was much to be cuthat range from the hard-core to hot tubs to the Terrence Higgins Trust. There was also a continuous live show (with both show girls and boys), an art exhibit and an Internet city.

Fair. Here I find the passion bed, complete with leather pilactly what had brought them to thing hanging over it. "That is part of the headboard. "See, volunteers now. Interested?"



Not to mention the Fetish a tantric love swing," says the stocks that work. They are diminutive Kim Brown of Ero-

completely disguised." He says teak who made the bed from the love swing has been tested lows, fur sheets and a web-like salvaged wood. He lifts up up to 16 stone. "I'm looking for

ther, despite an eye-catching sotto voce, "In our experience stay. David Woodhouse, 30,

The woman at the dikdo stall display of a life-size John is not surprised at the lack of Wayne cut-out complete with

people buy after they've had a few drinks.

The message yesterday was bought one of her wares yet eitheme," she explains and adds that sex is out of the closet to

Too sexy for my shirt: Models and punters watching the catwalk 'bridal' show at Olympia where both girls and beys strut non-stop. Photograph: David Rose

and Paul Stephens, 28, are neighbours and fishing buck dies from St Austell. They have come up for the day to check out the scene and claim that their wives and even David's moth er know their whereabouts. We are users of pornography and so is my wife to a lesser degree. It's been tucked under the carpet for long," said David. Paul nodded and said: "I mean it is only recently that I even found out that there was a fetish club in Cornwall."

By now the catwalk show is in full swing with a bride traipsing around in white suspenders. A Page 3 model squeezes by I spot a few from the raincoat brigade before heading outside. There I overhear a woman on her mobile. "Let me just say it's an eye-opener. Dog collars, dolls, whips. I can't really speak," she says, looking at me. "but it is a real eye opener. You'll enjoy it." And then she tucks her phone away, tightens the belt on her raincoat and

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3 WAYS TO BUY

Elton's togs draw the cash despite the buttoned purses

'No Shop Day' was perhaps not the most auspicious day for Elton John to sell his clothes. But those at the sale should not feel too bad. At least the clothes were being recycled, Clare Gamer points out.

They were not supposed to be getting out their cheque dilly, London, could not resist a Versace shirt for £25 or a designer tie for just £15.

The notion of a "No Shop Day", which was invented by green organisations to remind us of the excesses of our consumer culture, probably means Key, who organised the singer's sale and has worked with him

shopper. Elton will go into a shirt and then buy it in six dif-

items. The originals cost a total of £2.5m, but secondhand £6,000 Versace leather suit worn by Elton at the designer's nothing". funeral earlier this year was a

Shop Day, was surprisingly easy nothing to Elton. As Robert are buying secondhand clothes,

ferent colours." Indeed, it took him just three years to accumulate yes-

for years, said: "He is a great installation art piece in south London is offering customers a store and ask for a particular chance to prove their anti-consumerist credentials. No Shop is part of Friends of the Earth's Fair Share campaign, which focuses on the need to reduce materday's collection of 10,000 terial consumption and pollution to defined ecological limits, and questions whether inthey were going for 10 per cent creasing consumerism can deof their value new. Thus the liver a better quality of life. It "promises everything but sells

The window of No Shop is books at all yesterday, but bar- snip at £600. The £250,000 full of goods and special offers, gain hunters at the Elton John raised was to go to the Elton but the space inside simply Mike Childs, a senior cam- shelves and a single "No Sales paigner at the environmental Assistant" behind an image of group Friends of the Earth, a cash register. Visitors are givwhich organised events for No en a receipt thanking them for "not shopping at No Shop". on Elton. "At least Elton is flog- No Shop, 131 Lower Marsh,

ging off his clothes for charity London SE1, is open to the puband those people buying them lic today, Monday and Tuesday. Other activities will take place which is not a bad thing." he said. in shopping centres today, In-In contrast to Elton's sale, an ternational No Shop Day.

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Murder case RAF man was impotent

A senior RAF officer accused with Dudukovic had been "a bit of murdering his wife over an infatuation with a 21-year-old woman yesterday told a court that he had been impotent after returning from the Gulf in

RAF Regiment Squadron Leader Nicholas Tucker, 46, who is based at RAF Honington, Suffolk, told a jury at Norwich Crown Court that he had had sex "infrequently" between 1991 and 1995 because of the problem.

Tucker denies murdering his wife Carol 52, at Lackford, Suffolk, on 21 July 1995, Prosecu- 1995. tors say he was infatuated with Dijana Dudukovic - n Serbian interpreter he had met while serving in the former Yugoslavia in the first half of

Yesterday. Tucker who served as a nuclear, biological and chemical weapons expert during the Gulf conflict in 1990. said his attempts to have sex his visit to the clinic.

of a disaster".

Yesterday he faced questioning from David Stokes QC. prosecuting. He told Mr Stokes that although he had known Miss Dudukovic since January 1991, their relationship had been nothing special. He said it had only become sexual when he took Miss Dudukovic back to London for a week about a

month before his wife's death. Mr Stokes asked Tucker about a visit he had made to a venereal disease clinic shortly after he returned home on 15 July

The doctor he saw told the court how Tucker explained that be had last had sex with his Serbian girlfriend two weeks before and had not had sex before that for two years.

Under cross-examination Tucker said his last sexual contact with Miss Dudukovic had been about three weeks before

And he said he had not had sex before that for a longer period than the two years noted by the doctor.

"It is actually more than that [two years]," said Tucker. "When I came back from the Gulf I was impotent. In fact, it had been longer than

"Sex had been infrequent since early 1991."

Tucker told the court that he had not expected to see Miss Dudukovic again after leaving Bosnia in mid-July.

But the court heard that he had contacted her by phone two days after returning to England, on the morning of the day his wife died, and again on the day after his wife died.

He had continued to contact her by phone for many months after that, the court had heard, The case continues.



Seeing the funny side: Tory party leader William Hague's speech gets the audience laughing at the National Conservative Women's annual con-Photograph: Rui Xavier ference in the Queen Elizabeth II centre at Westminster yesterday -by G

Guerin suspect jailed for 20 years

A man identified by an arrest- during 1995 and 1996. He also ing garda officer as the killer of confirmed that he prepared and crime journalist Veronica Guerin was yesterday jailed for 20 years on drugs trafficking charges.

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Patrick "Dutchy" Eugene Holland, 58, also known as "the Wig." with an address at Brittas Bay, Co Wicklow, was cited by Garda Marion Cusack as the person suspected of shooting the reporter in June 1996 when she arrested him a Dun Laoghaire last April.

The trial was held in the nonjury Special Criminal Court. which hears terrorist and criminal cases where jurors could be at risk. Evidence was heard from Charles Bowden, the first person to testify before an Irish court under the new witness protection programme.

Bowden, 33, a former soldier now serving a sentence for drugs offences, ran a cannabis distribution operation on behalf of others who the court ordered should not be named. He said he regularly supplied Holland with 20 to 50 kilos of cannabis

primed the .357 Magnum revolver, imported with a cannabis consignment in early 1996, which was used to kill Ms Guerin, but had not known the intention was to kill her.

Mr Justice Johnson said it would be dangerous to convict on the evidence of Bowden alone, an accomplice, but cited corroborating evidence from gardai that Holland had said in custody "Look lads, I have my own customers and I am not going to implicate them".

The court heard Holland's nickname was on lists found at a Dublin lock-up garage used in preparing cannabis supplies where 47kg of the drug were found. Holland denied ever receiving cannabis and rejects Bowden's and garda evidence. Holland has convictions dating from 1965 for offences including armed robbery and

possession of explosives. The court refused leave to appeal to the Supreme Court. - Alan Murdoch

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Beckett defends 'blind trust'

Margaret Beckett last night said she would keep a "blind trust" unless Sir Patrick Neill, the watchdog on standards, rules against the practice in his

review on party funding. The President of the Board of Trade defended the blind trust, which helps fund her constituency office, and rejected a call by her Conservative shadow, John Redwood, to follow the example of Cabinet colleagues, including the Prime Minister, to wind it up. Mr Red-

ett to publish the names of her donors to the trust. Mrs Beckett said on BBC radio: "I use it to employ a member of staff, so if I had to give it up it would be a source of great regret to me because she is a very good and hard-work-

wood also called on Mrs Beck-

ing member of staff." Mrs Beckett, a keen caravanner, earlier opened the Caravan and Outdoor Leisure Show at Earl's Court in London year are from overseas. In preand said critics should praise the industry's major contribution to the economy.

"Caravan manufacture is a British success story - 95 per cent of all caravans sold in the UK are British-made," she said.

Bribes inquiry at Sandhurst

The Ministry of Defence has launched an investigation into allegations that Army instructors at Sandhurst Royal Military College in Berkshire took "huge bribes" from overseas cadets in return for better grades.

Non-commissioned officers at Britain's leading military academy are said to have accepted BMW and Mercedes cars, Rolex watches and foreign holidays. An MoD spokesman confirmed that the Royal Military Police were investigating a "number of allegations raised by some overseas officer cadets". "The issue is in connection with the acceptance of gifts in contravention of Queen's regulations for the Army," he said.

The men are believed to have been taken temporarily into custody before being allowed to go back to work while the investigation takes place.

About 10 per cent of the 600 cadets attending Sandhurst each vious years some have given instructors presents after the passing-out parade. But it is alleged that some have made gifts before the parade in the hope of having their grades boosted. — Ian Burrell

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The rift between the US

and Israel is deepening in

the wake of the crisis in

Iraq. President Clinton

blames the Israeli Prime

Minister for undermining

US influence by reneging

on the previous israeli government's deal with the Palestinians. Patrick Cockburn, in

Jerusalem, explains why the two allies are at odds

At one moment their planes

were within 200 yards of each

other at Los Angeles airport but they never met. Bill Clinton is

putting real effort into not

meeting Benjamin Netanyahu

in order to underline his dis-

pleasure at the actions of the

İsraeli Prime Minister. Instead

of the American President, Mr

Netanyahu had to make do

with a talk with Arnold

Schwarzenegger, for whom he

by the week, do not go unno-

ticed by Mr Netanyahn. "Don't

you know, there is a Saddam

Hussein of the East," he com-

plained privately, speaking of

President Clinton's attitude to-

wards him. "And there is me,

the Saddam Hussem of the

West." In a fit of pique he told

his office to stop trying to

arrange a meeting with the

Irritation in Washington at

month she encountered an em-

barrassing silence. The Doha

economic conference in Qatar,

originally billed as an important

Arab neighbours, was a flop.

Even Kuwait, which only exists

now because of the Gulf War,

refused to endorse American .

military action against President

holding him responsible for

eroding America's alliance with

Council from agreeing to the

Iraq's Foreign Minister, Mo-

hammed Saeed al-Sahaf, on

Thursday ruled out allowing the

current Unscom weapons in-

spectors in Baghdad to visit the

mitted to go there," he said.

monitors headed for Iraqi sites

yesterday for the seventh consecutive day after Baghdad's de-

cision to allow UN inspection

teams, including Americans, to resume their work. The official

Iraqi news agency INA said that

among them was a team of nu-

clear weapons specialists. The agency quoted a source criti-

cising the teams for doing in-

spections on Friday, which was

has been the main sticking

point since the weapons in-

spections resumed last week.

have to give Iraq a clean bill of health before UN sanctions

imposed after the 1990 invasion

In February 1994, the

turned an automatic rifle on Muslim worshippers kneeling

in prayer in the Tomb of the

Palestinians before being

beaten to death. The most

militant among Jewish settlers have praised Goldstein as a

hero, and his grave has be-

come a site of pilgrimage.

of Kuwait can be lifted.

The weapons inspectors

Access to presidential palaces and other sensitive sites

Eight teams of UN arms

Iraq initiative.

In words expressed private-

Mr Netanyahu blithely says

Saddam.

the predominant power in the Mr Clinton is being "naive" in

State, toured the region drum- the conservative Arab states.

against Saddam Hussein this ly, but likely to increase Amer-

Iraq opens palace

doors to the West

Iraqi newspapers yesterday said try to "prevent the Special Baghdad hoped a decision to al- Commission and the Security

ding Iraq of weapons of mass palaces. "No one will be per-

summit between Israel and its in."

ican anger, the Israeli Prime

Minister added: "Once the

first American tank crosses into

Iraq, the Arabs will all join

tanyahu (and perhaps not even

him), thinks this is true. At the

same moment as Mrs Albright

was failing to win support for the

US in the Gulf, Tariq Aziz, the

Iraqi deputy prime minister, was

having a more successful tour.

culminating in a visit to Dam-

ascus, the first time an Iraqi

leader has visited Syria's capi-

Is the American grip on the

tal in 17 years.

Nobody, apart from Mr Ne-

Middle East faltering? The pol-

icy of so-called "dual-contain-

ment" of Iraq and Iran is

looking very ragged. After me-

diating an agreement which

led to a return of the US in-

spectors to Baghdad last week,

Russia is once more a power in

the region, for the first time

But the change can be ex-

the Middle East, but not at the we can whack him," a senior

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rect at time of going to press. Normal price of 24 bottles (25.20. Available to over 18's only. Offer subject to availability.

aggerated. Moscow wants as

much influence as it can get in

price of a confrontation with the

American political and financial

Boris Yeltsin's need for

since 1990.

support is too great. Even Iraq,

in its own way, wants an un-

derstanding with the US, with

whom it was allied during its

war against Iran from 1980 to

and Israel are surprised by the

course of the latest Gulf crisis

because, for once, President

Saddam has not over-played his

hand. "We're just waiting for him to do something stupid so

It may be that both the US

Mr Netanyahn's deep-freezing of

agreements with the Palestinians

has been mounting for months.

But it is the renewed Iraq crisis,

the most serious challenge to the

US in Middle East since the in-

vasion of Kuwait in 1990, which

has convinced Washington in the

last few weeks that Israel's de-

fiance is costing it dearly in the

The Gulf War left America

region. But when Madeleine Al-

bright, the US Secretary of

ming up support for action

low foreign experts to check

Saddam Hussein's presidential palaces for banned weapons

would defuse its stand-off with

inspectors charged with rid-

destruction must enjoy unfet-

tered access to sites, while

Baghdad says some areas are off

limits to the UN Special Com-

mission (Unscom), though oth-

er foreign experts will be

plosion of the situation in the

region as a result of America's

aggressive escalation." Iraq's

ruling Baath party newspaper

sent the UN an invitation for

some 117 foreign experts to vis-

it the palaces and presidential

buildings to see if they contain

any prohibited weapons. The in-

vitations were extended to UN

Security Council member

Al-Thawra urged them "to

react positively". But the paper said it expected the US would

incitement to racism.

pended sentences.

author, was sentenced to eight

months for supporting a terrorist organisation, while two

Judge Yaakov Tzaban said

the three were no different

from the Muslim extremists

who praise Islamic militant

suicide bombers, the Yediot Ahronot daily said. "The book

Iraqi media said Tareq Aziz,

the deputy prime minister, had a Muslim holiday.

Bomb author jailed

A Jewish extremist who wrote turns an act of terror into an a book in praise of Baruch act of bravery, and the per-Goldstein, the Hebron mosque petrator of this act into a hero massacre gunman, has been ... a society wanting to pre-

jailed for eight months. A vent terrorism cannot allow

Jerusalem magistrate said the such a publication," Judge

Michael Ben Horin, the Brooklyn-born Goldstein

men who helped him to write Patriarchs in the West Bank it were fined and given sus- town of Hebron. He killed 29

book, Baruch, the Hero was an Tzaban said.

"Iraq wants to avert an ex-

allowed to visit them.

al-Thawra said.

Washington insists that UN

Washington.

Arab world.

These snubs, more blatant

expressed deep admiration.

and why it matters.

SATURDAY 29 NOVEMBER 1997

12/MID-EAST

Netanyahu: Why the US can't stand him

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Face off: Bill Clinton is strenuously avoiding any

contact with the Israeli

Netanyahu, in a bid to

force the 'Saddam of the

West' to make peace with

leader has shown surprising

flexibility. By allowing UN inspectors looking for his nonconventional weapons to return

and to enter his palaces he is denying the US a cause around which to rally support.

Mr Netanyahu may think it

is unfair for the US to blame

him for its difficulties in winning Arab support against Iraq. But

he cannot be surprised that

President Clinton does not like

him. The American leader

made strenuous efforts to keep.

him out of power in Israel in

1996. Immediately after the

bus bombings in Jerusalem last

year, Mr Clinton organised a

conference of world leaders at

Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt in

support of Shimon Peres, the Is-

raeli prime minister who went

on to lose the general election.

thinks that, eventually, he can

face down the White House. Be-

tween one-quarter and a half of

the Democratic Party's cam-

paign funds are estimated to

come from the American Jew-

ish community. Aid for Israel

was held up twice this year - an

unheard of action by Congress

- but this was opposed by pow-

erful politicians such as Newt

Gingrich, the Speaker of the

House, some of whose largest

donors are Jewish right-wingers.

may have miscalculated. In the

present crisis. Israel is a strate-

gic liability for the US as it tries

to retain its hold over the Mid-

think of Mr Netanyahu as the "Saddam Hussein of the West".

Pentagon official was quoted as then Israel, for the first time,

saying a fortnight ago. He may may come under intense ores-

do so, but so far, unlike the Gulf sure from the US to reach an

crisis in 1990-91, the Iraqi agreement with the Palestinians.

If Washington truly begins to

But Israel's Prime Minister

Mr Netanyahu presumably

leader, Benjamin

the Palestinians

EuroF

Europe's new militants: marching for the soft life

Germany's streets are filling again with marching students, But lmre Karocs in Bonn says that, unlike their forebears in 1968, today's protesters lack lofty goals. They are striking to preserve their privileges.

The most powerful wave of student protests to hit Germany for 20 years is spreading. Tens of thousands have demonstrated this week in Berlin, Frankfurt and almost every university town. On Thursday universities should adopt 40,000 rallied in Bonn to vent their fury at the federal government. The strikes, occupations and disruptions are to continue next week, when students will mass on regional capitals.

a decade but now enough is enough. A government plan to reform university funding, and tentative hints of a fundamental overhaul of higher education, have opened the floodgates. The problem is similar to that in Britain, only more extreme. and other entertainment and In the past 20 years the intake subsidised crèches. Who pays? of universities has doubled, while funds to pay for the 1.8 million students have shrunk. Standards have been eroding to such an extent that the decline is seen as a threat to Ger-

2.82

many's competitiveness. "The students have legitimate reasons to protest," said Jürgen Rüttgers, the Education is far from perfect. For most uni-Minister.

"They are lacking books, lecture halls are overcrowded, fessors ... Society has neglect-

ed the universities for too long." The students hoped this would be remedied in the usual German manner, with the government throwing a little more money in their direction. No such luck. Instead of building lecture theatres and hiring more professors, the authorities are proposing to tinker with only the demand side of the economic equation.

There is talk, or at least whispers, of tuition fees. Plans are afoot to empower universities to weed out entrants and evict laggards prematurely: maybe only five years after the start of their course. And there is even the shocking suggestion that British-style bachelor's degrees, to shorten the time the youth of today spend dreaming among the spires or amid heaps of red brick. On average, German students spend 10 years of their lives at university. They hit the They have endured cuts for job market just as they encounter the first worrying signs of middle-age spread.

Many stay longer, marrying, and taking advantage of perks that include cheap public transport and canteen food, reductions for cinemas, museums - 90 per cent of the tab is picked up by regional governments, the rest by Bonn. Grants to cover living costs are scarce. Parents must pay for students' upkeep and the students themives must make up the shortfall by doing holiday jobs.

Everybody agrees the system versity courses, there is one requirement: applicants must pass the Abittar at the end of their secand there are too many students ondary schooling. Over the waiting ... to talk to their pro- years, it has got easier, and so the campuses have filled up. Ad-



Shot down: Students protesting about the money spent on Eurofighter, demanding that some should go on education Photograph: Reuters

ministrators in Bonn hire cin- vative dissatisfied with the conemas hooked up to their lecture servative government's rehalls for over-subscribed lecforming zeal. Asked if he tures. At many biology classes, wanted to change the world, he was indignant: "No way. This so-12 students get to carve up one rat among them. Christoph ciety cannot be changed."

Bonn university's Great Hall.

lution, but it's a beginning."

Pieper, a 23-year-old student of But some students are pre-German and Latin, knows of pared to consider the possibility that certain things cannot go only one way to create order in this chaos. "We are striking for a better financing of higher

Michael Shohal, a 23-yeareducation," he said as he hung old psychology student, is a banner across the archway of against the strike, but not because he has any sympathy for "There is plenty of money the government.

around. The Bundestag has "I understand if we strike just approved DM23bn for Euabout lack of money and rerofighter. The universities sources - that's OK, because the would need only about two to system is really collapsing. What three billion of that. I admit it I don't understand is how peois not an entirely satisfactory sople expect to pay nothing and yet expect higher standards. Mr Pieper is no rabble- There is simply not enough rouser, merely a closet conser- money in this country for that."

HEWLETT A

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By German standards, Arnd H 27, is precocious. He did his fi gree long ago and is about to his PhD thesis. Not surprising one considers where he studied don. His parents sent him her 15 to learn English and he stay

He remained for a year to ple parents and enrolled for sixth for ter that there was really no cho wanted to do biochemistry. In many, very few universities offe course ... In Britain, every standard university does it."

After three years at Imperi lege he had his first degree, two ahead of the brainiest of his G contemporaries. An increasing r of Germans are fleeing to esca crowds, irrelevant courses and herent professors at home: an est 10,000 study at British unive and 8,000 in the US and the n of foreigners attracted by G universities is falling.

"Anyone who can afford sends their children to unive abroad," said Guido Westerwel retary of the Free Democratic The rest are stuck with ... lowe ity and far longer terms studyinį Hosterts are satisfied with the their money bought in London was recently joined by his broth is studying medicine at



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rafty ways with silk

furnishings to clothes and wall ngs, silk painting is extremely tile. Sally Staples joins a course to

are 10 of us sitting around a large farmkitchen table tucking into a selection of siche, salads, fruit and home-made cake atting away like old friends. The scenario vhat you might except in a conventional ducation class. Although the pupils - all on this particular course - have signed learn silk painting, they also have the to relax and make friends in homely surngs set deep in the Wye valley. de are residential, using all the facili-

the converted old Edwardian coach

as though it were home. Others, who

cally, join the art centre's five-day

for just a day or two. Anyone, says tutor

sh, can enjoy learning the techniques

painting. There is no need to be cre-

talented. There is no pressure to

ıry Self from Alcester has drawn a design

orate a silk tie for her son's Christmas

.. His name she admits coyly is Will. Will

iomehow it is hard to imagine the

hus novelist wearing a silk tie designed

and there are plenty of laughs.

by Mummy. Hilary is used to the openmouthed reaction when she reveals her son's identity. Then after just the right pause she laughs and admits her Will is not the Will. But she confesses they do have plenty of fun with other people's confusion.

She has set up her tie on a frame and is outlining the deign with a "gutta" which is similar to the masking fluid used in watercolour. Because Will has just moved house, she has designed the tie with dozens of tiny houses becoming progressively smaller as the tie narrows. Once the outlining is complete, she can colour them with water-based paint and once dry they are fixed by ironing.

Care worker Rachel Perryman, aged 25, who is between jobs, is working faster than any of the others and she has chosen to tackle a

> large rectangular piece of silk which she will turn into a scarf, or possibly a wall hanging. The silk is stretched across a frame to keep it in place and Rachel has outlined a selection of leaves entertained with flowers and butterflies. Now she is having fun with a selection of rich colours, mixing greens and blues and reds and progressing at great speed.

"I did art A-lev-

el and my mother painting so I thought I'd have a go. The course is brilliant and Liz gives us some useful tips to create special effects."

One of these is to dampen the silk, paint it with your chosen colours and then sprinkle salt over the pattern while still wet. When the paint has dried the salt can be shaken off and leaves behind a mottled effect.

Brenda Clough, from North Somerset, has chosen to paint an autumn scene on her piece of silk, and the skill with which she produces slender leaves and twirling vines indicates that she is not a beginner. Brenda has worked with watercolours before and admits this helps with silk painting.

Also on the course is a granddaughter and granny team who have never tried silk painting before. Nine Staniford, 23, a website designer who lives locally, persuaded her granny Dorothy to visit the arts centre and try one of the courses. Dorothy, on holiday from Cheshire, is delighted with what she has achieved in such a short time.

She bought some padded silk spectacle cases from tutor Liz and has painted them with floral scenes. "I'm not much of an artist but I copied some pictures of flowers and I don't think they've come out too badly," she said. Nina has painted a variety of design on silk bowties as Christmas presents and is now working on a large scarf decorated with flowers and leaves. She has cut out the flower shapes, pinned them to the silk and then outlined them with the gutta before chosing what colours to

Liz emphasises to her students that any mistakes made on the silk are not reasons to panic. "Use your mistakes," she charges her pupils. "You can often turn them into something quite interesting. I use water-based solvent free paints and I bring a selection on the course so that students can buy what they need if they are beginners. There is so much on the market that it does help to get some guidance on the products."

Meanwhile, the informality of the Wye Valley Arts Centre makes it very popular. Director Valerie Welham tells the story of one young student who felt so at home that, feeling a littie peckish, he popped down to the kitchen in the early hours of the morning and devoured half the chicken casserole that had been made for the following day's lunch.

A five-day silk-painting course for residential students at the Wye Valley Arts Centre Centre costs £280 which includes full board and tuiton fees. For further information on this and other courses contact Valerie Welham at The Old Coach House, Mork, St Briavel's, Lydney, Gloucestershire GL15 6QH (01291 689463 or 01595 530214; website: www.wyeart.mcmail.com or e-mail: wyseart@mcmail.com). Liz Nash can offer further advice on silk painting (01794 301217) and also teaches evening classes at Romsey School, Greatbridge, Romsey, Hants (01794



Special effects: Liz Nash's silk-painting course is creative, fun and sociable

Photographs: Christopher Jones

AMES

VN O'BEIRNE RANELAGH N'T JUNK IT – USE IT

eek, we are going to do some origami square shape, with a triangle on top. it easier, we shall not be ing with those tiresome diagrams that aper-folding so cumbersome. τ with a square of paper with sides of lin long. Now, to make the tions easier to follow, mark the s A, B, C and D (in that order), the ints of the sides E, F, G and H (with een A and B. F between B and C 1d the centre O. (Find the centre by in half and unfolding, first side to ien top to bottom.) Copy the letters he back, in case you lose them. old B and D to meet in the centre, O. rease the line AO backwards. ow comes the difficult bit: bring A o C, folding on the crease that you st made to bring H, E and F er. You should now have a flat

4. Ium your attention to the corner where A and C meet, and fold the small triangular portion (including the A corner) up inside the pocket above it. A should now be tucked up with B, D and O.

5. Fold up C into the same pocket to lock the previous flap in place. You are now left with a triangular pocket, with a smaller triangle surmounting it.

6. Fold the top triangle not quite all the way into the top pocket, leaving it sticking out by a few millimetres.

7. Turn the paper over, and that's it. Oh, you want to know what it is, do you? Well I'll tell you. What you have made is a neat little bookmark with a tab. Carry it with you at all times, slip it over the corner of the page when you stop reading, and dog-cared books will be a thing of the past.

CLUEDO WILLIAM HARTSTON

It was the chap with the silly name, in the hotel near Windsor, with the 8ft piece of lead piping. Or it might have been the PR chap from Waddingtons, with the mobile ohone, in the bar,

Today, at the Oakley Court Hotel near Windsor, Britain's first official Cluedo Convention is taking place to raise money for the charity Children With Leukemia. They began yesterday, with playlets, unusual identification parades and odd challenges as well as normal Cluedo games, all to determine who wins the first prize of a murder mystery trip on the Venice Simplon Orient Express.

Cluedo, for anyone who does not know it, is a board game of logical deduction. It starts with a man. Dr Black.

having been murdered. Cards indicate who killed him, in what room, and with which weapon, are hidden in an envelope. The other cards are distributed among the players who may gain information by asking questions of each other in turn, while moving their pieces, according to dice throws, round a flat-plan of the mansion in which the

murder took place. Invented by Anthony Pratt, a Leeds solicitor's clerk, in 1946, Cluedo has now sold well over 100 million sets around the world. It has also inspired a film and a television series. The present event, however, is the first to offer bonus points to any entrant who shares a name with any of the Cluedo characters. My money's on Colonel Mustard.

PANDORA MELLY GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

James Dyson, 50, inventor and manufacturer of the Dyson bagless vacuum cleaner

I play Monopoly, but without much enjoyment. It's a bit tedious going round the board and acquiring things. More fun when everybody's going bankrupt and you start borrowing money or negotiating properties with people in lieu of rent. When you're doing something with another person, it stops being a matter of luck. I'd like to get straight into that, and forgo throwing the

dice and moving round the board. I think Monopoly is a game you play in your late teens and early twenties, and it always mirrors later life in some way. There are people who haven't looked at the long term. They accumulate, then run out of cash because they haven't bought any buildings, and they land on people who've mortgaged themselves to the hilt to build hotels.

Some people like trains and always buy the stations, but they're just being romantic, because it's an hotel on the red or vellow squares which will crucify the other players. I've always thought it's a mistake to buy

Mayfair and Park Lane because they're frightfully expensive and you've only got two to land on. Whereas if you've blocked off a corner with the red and orange sets, people will land on you every single time. That's the fun of it for me: getting the

strategy right and thinking for the long term. I re always done that, and I'll mortgage myself to the hilt in order to get something valuable. The stations will get you a little money in the short term, but the winners are always the people with the swanky hotels.

In a way, I dread playing. I have to make investments and negotiate with people in my everyday life. In the evenings, the last thing I want is a kind of repetition with Monopoly.

Loose Monopoly money may be swept up with a Dyson bagless vacuum cleaner. Read all about it, and its inventor, in James Dyson's "Against the Odds" (Orion Books, £18.99).

4

:SS: WILLIAM HARTSTON

ın you tell a human rom a computer? Alan Turing proposed ious "Turing Test" for ie intelligence his ts were clearly on too d a plane to encompass a of people cheating in simultaneous display. dea was to have an nenter asking questions respondents, one , one machine. If the ter can be programmed its responses cannot be ished from the 's, then, by Turing's , one has to admit that chine is intelligent. hat if the experimenter torld chess champion. questions take the f moves played in a of chess games? It is icult to devise a set of as that will discriminate n computers and s, but if the champion's objective is to win the then discrimination is more difficult. hat was it that made Casparov think that a empeting against him e Internet in a neous display a couple as ago was using a er to help select its ' Black's excellent g play - and the e of a computer beside ard (necessary for the t connection) - may

en enough to alert

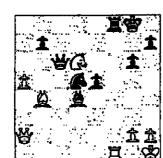
ov's suspicions. The ss with which they then

threaded their way through complex tactics seemed to confirm it. Finally, 29...Rf8! was too much for him. After 30.Rxf8+ Kxf8 White has no good discovered check with his knight, because the threat of Qc1+ is hanging over him.

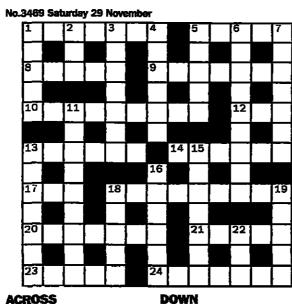
So Kasparov refused to continue the game. The captain of the Internet team has strongly denied all charges, pointing out that the players were being watched all the time. I don't know who is right. See what you think:

White: Garry Kasparov Black: Internet Chess Club

1 d4 Nf6 16 Ng5 e3 2 c4 g6 17 cxd6 cxd6 3 Nc3 Bg7 18 fxc3 Bh6 19 Rxf8+ Qxf8 4 e4 d6 20 Ne4 Bxe3+ 5 Bc2 0-0 6 NB e5 21 Kh1 Nf5 22 Ra3 Bd4 7 0-0 Nc6 23 Qd2 Qd8 8 d5 Ne7 9 b4 a5 24 Bg4 Ne7 25 Bxc8 Qxc8 10 Ba3 axb4 11 Bxb4 Nd7 26 Nxd6 Qd7 12 a4 f5 27 Rf3 Nxd5 28 Qa2 Qc6 13 a5 Nf6 29 Rf1 Rf8 14 c5 Nxe4 15 Nxe4 fxe4



CONCISE CROSSWORD



With one's king under attack (2.5) Avoids (5)

Eagle's nest (5) Kenyan port (7) 10 Infectious disease (9) 12 Bird of prey (3) 13 Digs (6) 14 Small fish (6) 17 Enemy (3) 18 Yield (9)

20 Cuisine (7) 21 Front part of stage (5) 23 Subject to ebbs and flows Ancient British tribe (5) Vehicle (3)

Carry out (7) Japanese robe (6) Latin American dance Plain (9) Not deep (7) Lie (9) Shortfall (7) Imprecise (7)

Coloured pencil (6)

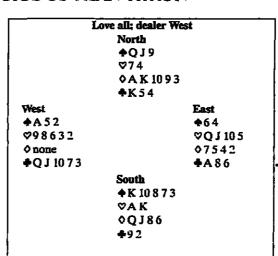
Area for shooting prac-

Charm (5)

tice (5) 22 Bone (3) 24 Worthy of remark (7)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword: ACROSS: 1 Harts, 4 Topping (Heartstopping), 8 Lampoon, 9 Niece, 10 Inner, 11 Related, 13 Glen, 15 Guinea, 17 Voyage, 20 Stve, 22 Replete, 24 David, 26 Grent, 27 Popular, 28 Deserve, 29 Suede, DOWN: 1 Helping, 2 Roman, 3 Scourge, 4 Tenure, 5 Panel, 6 Inertia, 7 Greed, 12 Envy, 14 Last, 16 Impress, 18 Oedipus, 19 Endorse, 21 Temple, 22 Rigid, 23 Enter, 25 Value.

BRIDGE: ALAN HIRON



West had a very clear idea as to how the defence should go on this deal, but unfortunately his partner was not on the same wavelength. Could be have made matters easier for

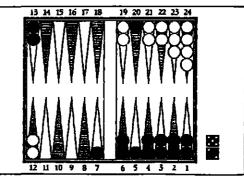
After a pass by West, North opened One Diamond, South responded One Spade, and now West came to life with Two Diamonds - a Michaels cue-bid, suggesting length in the unbid suits. North doubled - not because he expected his opponents to play there, but conventionally showing three-card support for spades. East passed, and South's jump to Four Spades ended the auction. (A save in Five Hearts by East-West would have cost only 100 points.) West led ♣Q against Four Spades and was allowed to

hold the trick. He realised that the defenders could come to at most two club tricks and he continued with \$\displays 3 to East's ace and awaited a diamond return.

He is still waiting, for East switched to the queen of hearts. East never got in again, and South was soon able to

You might argue that the three of clubs was a clear suit preference signal, but West had a more direct way of clarifying the position. Suppose he switches to ♥9 at trick two. This makes it clear that he has nothing of value in the heart suit, and later, when he gets in with the ace of trumps, his second club lead will be sure to attract the right

BACKGAMMON: CHRIS BRAY



This was a difficult decision which faced Wendy Kaplan in the final of the Illinois State Championship. At double match point Wendy - who remains the only woman ever to have won the World Championship has a 52 to play.

As she is trailing in the race by 62 pips to 90, the running play 20/13 can quickly be discounted. There are three real choices: (a) 13/8, 13/11; (b) 13/8, 7/5; (c) 7/5, 6/1. All three plays have their merits. Play (a) keeps contact without damaging the home board; play (b) constructs a closed home board making any hit by Black a game winner, but leaves White a direct shot; play (c) maintains maximum contact at the cost of a weakening of the home board.

In the game, Wendy made the bold choice of 13/8, 7/5. Her opponent rolled 43 which he played 6/2, 6/3. On her next roll Wendy had to move her remaining man from her mid-point. White then rolled 51, played 13/7. Wendy rolled 62, bitting both blots with 20/18*/12*, and easily won the game.

Wendy had made a bold play under pressure and reaped her due reward. The ability to play well under extreme pressure is the hallmark of a good player. And what of her choice of move?

Extensive roll-outs show that the best move is play (c), albeit not by much. The key thing for Black in this position is to hit a shot, and she should play the move that optimises her chances of a shot on the next roll. The slight damage to the home board is not as important as generating that possible shot. A good lesson in weighing the importance of different elements of a position.

6

○ (13) ② ●

15/HUNTING DEBATE

THE INDEPENDENT SATURDAY 29 NOVEMBER 1997



Battleline: While the debate raged, pro-Bill demonstrators confronted hunt supporters outside the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in Westminster Photograph: Rui Xavier

Alan Clark

ec includes air conditioning and a powerful six-speaker stereo. But for really taking the rough with the smooth, ting your binoculars on the Grand Cherokee Limited. For all its rugged ability, the 4.0 litre Limited can reach 0-60 mph under 10 seconds. And boasts automatic climate control, ABS and a sumptuous leather interior that includes power justable, heated, front seats. Is there a more luxurious way to reach 8,000ft? Only if you also own a private jet. ices for the Grand Cherokee range start at £26,495 on the road. JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE.



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How they voted on Bill for a ban

Bill for a ban

LABOUR MFP BACKING THE HUNTING SAN BILL

LABOUR MFP BACKING THE HUNTING SAN BILL

Alonger (Carmer then W and Femichochairs 8), Robert John NJ, Donald Anderson Dougla Alexander (Palsey S. Gruban Alex November 1), Consent San Advanced (Carenty Nethernon (Falsey S. Gruban Alex November 1), Donald Anderson Dougla Alexander (Palsey S. Gruban Alex November 1), Barry Armstrong (Durlan Nov.), See Addron (Basselle Horizotta), John Austin (Erich and Thanssansen), Tony Stone Advanced Health (Palsey), Language (Derby S.), Anne Egg (Aberdens 1), Canbornal, Clarkov Health (Palsey), Language (P McFait (Dumbarcon), Anne McGuire (Scring), Shona McSaar (Cleethorpes) drew Mackinsy (Thurrodd), Kevin McNamara (Hull N), Tony McNuity (Ha P), Denis MacShane (Rotherham), Flora MacTaggart (Slough), Tony McWalter (H Hempstead), John McWilliam (Blaydon), Alice Mahon (Halifze), Judy Maliaber (H Valley), Dr John Marek (Wrednam), Gordon Marsdon (Blackpool S), Paul N ber Valley), Dr John Marek (Wrednam), Gordon Marsden (Blackpool S). Paul Marsden (Shrewsbury and Andram), Jim Marsdall (Leiosser S), Robert Marshall-Andrews (Medway), Eric Mardew (Carlisle), John Maxon (Glasgow Cachcard). Michael Meron (Uncoln), Alan Meste (Mansfield), Gillian Meron (Lincoln), Alan Michael (Cardiff S and Penarth), Bill Michie (Sheffield Heeley), Alan Milburn (Darlingson), Laura Moffact (Crawley), Dr Lewis Moonie (Kirkozldy), Margaret Moran (Luson S), Julie Mongan (Cardiff N), Rhodri Morgan (Cardiff W), Ellot Morley (Scurhorpe), Essalle Morris (Birmingham Yardley), Dr Marjorie Mowlam (Redox), George Mudie (Leeds E), Chris Mullin (Sunderland S), Denis Murphy (Wansbeck), Jim Murphy (Easowood), Paul Murphy (Torfaen), Doug Naysmith (Brissol NW), Dan Norris (Wansdyke), Milan O'Brien (Warwickshire N), Willam O'Brien (Norwaley S), Bill O'Iner (Nuneston), Marcin O'Neill (Ochil), Dana Mudie (Leeds E), Chris Mullin (Sunderland S), Denis Murphy (Wansbeck), Jim Murphy (Essowood), Paul Murphy (Tortaen), Doug Naysmith (Bristol NW), Dan Norris (Wansdyke), Mills of O'Brien (Warwickshire N), William O'Brien (Normanoon), Eddie O'Hara (Knowsley S), Bill Olner (Nunescon), Marcin O'Neill (Ochil), Diana Organ (Foreact o'Dean), Sandra O'Borome (Ayr.), Nick Palmer (Groccows), Ian Pearson (Doddey S), Tom Pendry (Sullybridge and Hyde), Linds Perham (Bird N), Colin Pickshall (Lancashire W), Petar Pile (Burnley), James Plastict (Warwick and Learnington), Kerry Pollard (Sc Albans), Chris Pond (Gravestam), Greg Pope (Hyndburn), Scaphen Pound (Edling N), Sir Ray Powell (Ognore), Bridget Prentice (Lewisham B), Gordon Prentice (Pendie), Dawn Printarolo (Brissol S), Gwyn Prosser (Dover), Joyce Qual (Gatashead E and Washington W), Lawrence Quim (Scanborough and Whitby), Giles Radice (Durham N), Bill Rammell (Harlow), Syd Rapson (Portsmouth N), Nick Rayresford (Greenwich and Woolwich), Andrew Reed (Loughborough), George Robertson (Hamilson S), Geoffrey Robinson (Covenny NW), Barbara Roche (Hornasy and Wood Green), Allan Rogers (Rhondda), Jeff Rooker (Eirmingham Perry Barr), Terry Rooney (Bradford N), Ernia Ross (Cundee W), Ted Rowlands (Merchyr Tydfl and Rhymney), Frank Roy (Mcdharwell and Wishaw), Chris Ruane (Vale of Clwyd), Joan Ruddock (Lewisham Deptford), Christine Rusell (Chester City), Joan Ryan (Enfeld N), Harin Saleer, (Reading W), Mohammad Sarwar (Giesgow Govan), Malcolm Savidge (Aberdeen N), Philip Sawford (Kaccering), Rrian Sedgemore (Haciney's Sand Shoreddich), Jonation Shaw (Machon-under-Lyne), Debra Shipley (Sourbridge), Atan Simpson (Nottingham S), Marsha Singh (Bradford W), Dennis Stdanner (Bolsover), Angela Smith (Basildon), Chris Smith (Reddich), John Smith (Vale of Gilamorgan), Llewellyn Smith (Blaneau Gwent), Clive Sand Finsbury), Gerathme Smith (Morecambe and Luneschle), Jacusi Smith (Reddich), John Smith (Vale of Gilamorgan), Llewellyn Smith (Blaneau Gwent), Clive Soley (Eding Accon and Sheppor)

LABOUR MPs WHO VOTED AGAINST

Lin Golding (Newcastle-under-Lyme), Kase Hoey (Yaushall).

LABOUR MPs WHO DID NOT VOTE

Tony Blar (Sedgefield), David Blunker: (Sheffield Brightside), Gordon Brown (Dunfermine E), Torn Clarke (Coatbridge and Chryston), Harry Cohen (Leyton and Wanstead), Robin Cook (Livington), John Cummings (Easington), Dr Jack Cuminings (Copeland), Tam Dalyell (Linlithgow), Donald Dewar (Glasgow Anniestand), Frank Dobson (Holbom and St. Pancras), Frank Doran (Aberdeen Central), Gwyneth Dunwoody (Crewe and Nantwich), Frank Doran (Aberdeen Central), Gwyneth Dunwoody (Crewe and Nantwich), Frank Doran (Ebschhead), Sam Galratin (Strathlethin and Bearsden), Bruse George (Walsall S), Thomas Graham (Renkrewshire W), Nigal Griffiths (Edinburgh S), Adam Ingram (East Kithride), Peter Kithojie (Liverpool Walton), Helen Liddel (Alrdrie and Shotts), Tony Loyd (Pfanchesser Central), Peter Mandelson (Planthepool), David Marshall (Glasgow Shertieston), Andrew Miller (Elesmere Port and Nesson), Austin Micchell (Great Grimsby), John Morris (Aberswon), Kall Mountford (Coine Valley), John Prescott (Hull E), Ken Purchase (Wolverhempton NE), Dr John Reid (Hamtton N and Bellshitt), Clare Short (Birmingham Ladywood), Andrew Smith (Oxford E), Peter Snape (West. Broinwich E), Jack Straw (Blacidum), Brian Wilson (Cunninghame N), Roste Winterton (Doncaster Central), Tony Worthington (Cydebank and Milingavie).

LBERAL DEMOCRATS BACKING HUNTING BAN BILL
Richard Allan (Sheffield Hallam), Norman Baker (Lewes), jacide Ballard (Taumon),
Thomas Brake (Carshalton and Wallington), Paul Burscow (Sutton and Chearn),
Dr Vincent Cable (Twickenham), David Chidgey (Eastleigh), Brian Coccer (Weston-super-Mare), Edward Davey (Kingston and Subbton), Romile Feam (Southport),
Don Fosce (Bath), Andrew George (Sc Ives), Donald Gorrie (Edibourgh W), Mike
Hancock (Portsmouth S), Dr Evan Harris (Oxford W and Ablington), Simon Hughes (Southwark N and Barmondsey), Nigel Jones (Chettenham), Charles Kennedy
(Ross, Siye and Inverness W), Robert Macleman (Caldhress, Sucherland and Easter Ross), David Rendel (Newbury), Bob Russell (Cothester), Adrian Sanders (Torbay), Andrew Stanell (Newbury), Brok Russell (Cothester), Adrian Sanders (Torbay), Andrew Stanell (Hazel Grove), Macthew Taylor (Truro and Sc Aussell), Dr
Jenny Tonge (Richmond Park), Prof Sceven Webb (Northwon), Phil Willis (Harrogate and Knaresborough).

CONSERVATIVES BACKING HUNTING BAN BILL
David Amess (Southend W), David Adenson (Bournemouth E), Stephen Day (Cheadle), Roger Gale (Thanet N), John Randall (Uxbridge), John Taylor (Solihulf), St.
Teddy Taylor (Rochford and Southend E), Ann Widdecombe (Maidstone and the

Winnie Mandela was portrayed as the victim of a dirty propaganda war at yesterday's Truth and Reconciliation hearing. Mary Braid in Johannesburg says others accused her of being a police informer

Two former spies told the commission that British and American agents secretly helped the apartheid regime to spread rumours that Mrs Mandela was a child-killer, an alcoholic and a drug-user.

South African agents, it was claimed, placed this disinformation about Mrs Mandela in British newspapers.

Paul Erasmus, one of the South African agents, said members of the British Conservative Party's Monday Club were "principal agents" involved in spreading propaganda. His fellow operative, John Louis McPherson, claimed he had been given a list of friendly journalists.

But Azhar Cachalia, the chief ANC appointee in the Department for Safety and Security, said that during the late 1980s - when the murders and violent attacks Mrs Mandela is implicated in, including the killing of Stompie Seipei Moeketsi, 14, took place - many

suspected she was a police spy. "Just about everyone seemed to be aware that there were guerrillas and arms in the Mandela home," said Mr Cachalia, who was part of the leadership of the United Dedela in 1989. He said it was difficult to understand why the less there is accountability."

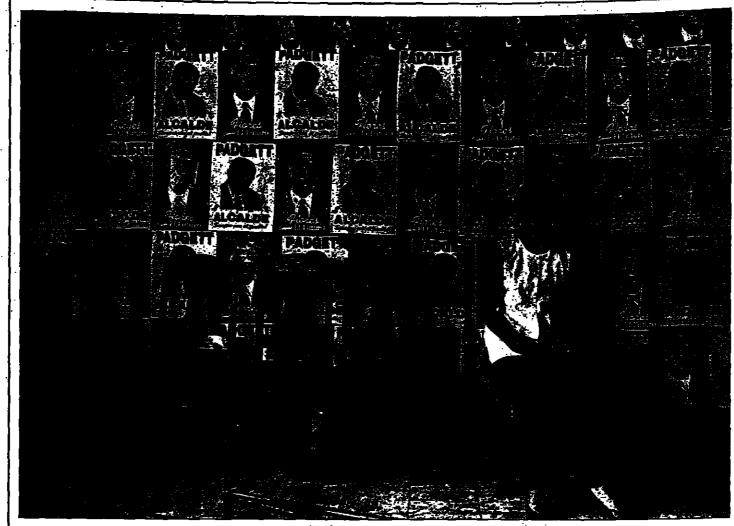
police did not raid her home at the height of the state of emergency. "Did they want to use what was happening around her home to discredit our president [Nelson Mandela] when he was released," he mused, shrugging his shoulders. "There were a million agendas."

A murky picture was further confused by an admission from the Police Commissioner, George Fivaz, that Jerry Richardson, former coach of the "Mandela Football Club" and now serving life for Stompie's murder, was a police spy. He was on the police payroll only two years ago. Mr Fivaz claimed he had provided information about other cases.

Richardson attended this week's hearings wearing the colours of the team that rarely took to the pitch but terrorised Soweto. Mr Cachalia said he thought Mrs Mandela was involved in the murder of Dr Abu Baker Asvat a few weeks after Stompie's murder.

The doctor is believed to have seen Stompie after he was beaten for three days at Mrs Mandela's home. Mr Cachalia said that because Mrs Mandela and the doctor had been close friends he had been unable to contemplate the possibility of her ordering the murder. Mr Cachalia launched an

emotional appeal to Mrs Mandela after a commissioner asked if his testimony was shaped by a "political agenda". The commissioner suggested he might be part of an Indian cabal within the ANC, which is hostile to "Africanists" such as Mrs Mandela. Mr Cachalia said: "Part of me wants to go up and hug you mocratic Front, which publicly and say Let us go away from all distanced itself from Mrs Man- this' ... But another part of me says we cannot go forward un-



Head cases: Candy Rosa Turcios, a Liberal Party worker, at an information centre in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. In presidential and general elections tomorrow the Liberal candidate, Carlos Flores Facusse, is expected to win the top post

Japan puts Nasa in space

Japan launched a foreign satellite with its own rocket for the first time yesterday, boosting the nation's satellite-launching technology and chances of developing a lucrative space pro-

The H-2 rocket, carrying a satellite designed to study tropical and subtropical rainfall, lifted off from Tanegashima Space Centre in southern Japan.

The tropical rainfall measuring mission satellite was developed at a cost of 33 billion yen (\$ 260m) by Nasa, the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

- Tokyo (AP)

Indian coalition collapses

The powerful Congress Party house," he said in a letter to the withdrew support from India's ruling coalition yesterday, forcing the Prime Minister to resign in the third government collapse in less than two years.

We have withdrawn support to the United Front government under IK Guiral. We have communicated this to the president," Congress chief Sitaram Kesri said, referring to the Prime Minister, Hours later, a spokesman announced Mr Gujral's resignation. Mr Kesri, during a 30-minute meeting with President KR Narayanan earlier in the day, had staked Congress's claim to form the

next government. "We are sure, given a chance, we would be able to prove our majority on the floor of the

president released to reporters. The President is India's constitutional head of state.

Congress abandoned Mr Gujral's seven-month-old, 14party United Front government after accusing one of its members of supporting rebels linked to the 1991 assassination of party leader and former Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. Congress and the Front came together in 1996 to keep the Bharatiya Janata Party from forming a government. Mr Guiral is the second prime minister to lead the nation and the United Front, after Congress withdrew support from a previous Front chief deemed ineffective in March.

Mugabe buys 1,500 farms on the cheap

The Zimbabwean government gazetted yesterday a list of 1,503 farms, owned mostly by white farmers, that it has earmarked to forcibly buy for a controversial peasant resettlement programme.

Political and economic analysis say the drive has severely undermined the southera African state's investment image, and is likely to damage its fragile economy and its chances of securing aid from the West.

The hit list includes company corned property such as Nuanetsi Ranch Ltd. whose farm of more than 310,000-hectares in south-eastern Zimbabwe is the largest and gle block to be earmarked for the programme. It also includes ranches in the south-west owned by the Oppenheimer family of South Africa's gold mining group Anglo American Corporation.

The government, which says it will pay only for equipment and improvements but not the land, invited those with "gennine grounds" for objecting to designation of the farms to lodge their complaints by 28 December. The government list contains more than a dozen farms owned by black farmers, although they do not include those of senior government officials, some of whom own several farms.

President Robert Mugabe said he was pressing ahead with the controversial land reform programme because it is crucial to achieving social justice.

The mainly white Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) said in a statement yesterday that it had emphasised to the government that land reform "for whatever reason" must be judged on how it contributes to economic growth, greater food security and job creation and stability.

The government did not say when it would actually take control of the 1,503 farms earmarked. But in October, Mr Mugabe said this would happen "in the year of our Lord 1997".

Mr Mugabe's plans have stirred anger and anxiety in the country's commercial farming heartland, where many say there is aiready enough land on the open market for the resettlement programme. The government wants to acquire some 5.5 million hectares (13.7 million acres) - about half the land owned by white farmers.

Mr Mugabe, who has ruled since independence in 1980, says that Britain, the former colonial master, should pay for the land which he said was seized by British immigrants when they colonised the country in the 1890s. Britain has refused, arguing the farmers were now Zimbabwean citizens.

--- Harare, Reuters

NO MONTH

NO CONNEN



THE INDEPENDENT

Mob backs

Pakistan PM

Government supporters

stormed Pakistan's Supreme

Court yesterday to demand the

resignation of Chief Justice

Sajjad Ali Shah for putting

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif

on trial for contempt of court.

Demonstrators climbed over

railings as dozens of riot po-

lice looked on and did noth-

ing. The demonstrators called

on Shah to to step down and

end weeks of constitutional cri-

sis caused by a showdown be-

tween Sharif, the judiciary and

President Farooq Leghari. The

confrontation has paralysed

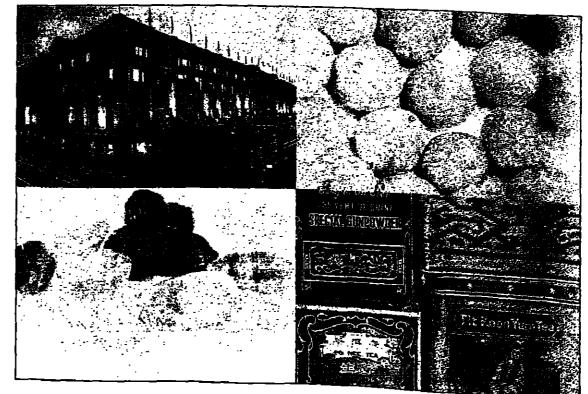
politics and unnerved financial

markets.

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1st December 1997: 7.30pm - 9.30pm

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Ticket Hotline No: 0171 293 2728

MONDAY-FRIDAY 8-8 SATURDAY 9-6

and SUNDAY

Synod backs

immigration

rethink on

We need to rethink our

That was the message

yesterday. Clare Gamer

from the General Synod

says they may have their

prayers answered when

the Government unveils

The issue of asylum seekers is

surrounded by ignorance and

fear, and the agenda dictated by

General Synod heard yesterday.

member's motion at Church

House, Westminster, the Rev

Act which removed all benefits

from asylum seekers unless

they had declared themselves at

Mr Houlding said that, while

port of entry into Britain.

the results of its policy

review in January.



Rough justice: Paul, a former resident at Campsfield House Detention Centre. Inmates claim they are subjected to racial abuse

Photograph; David Rose

Britain's four-letter welcome for the frightened

Britain treats many asylum-seekers as criminals who deserve both punishment and humiliation. Steve Crowshow talks to those at the sharp end who still hope that things might change.

In the visitors' reception area of Campsfield House – just inside the high perimeter fence, topped by double rolls of razorwire - a printed poster proclaims Froup Four's code of conduct with regard to the detainees. This includes the commitment to be "courteous, impartial, and free of racial bias".

Curious, then, that "fuck you" is a form of address frethat African asyhmn-seekers say they are told: "This isn't a black country", when they ask for an raped, and she was attacked. explanation of why they are being held behind bars.

Campsfield briefly found itself back in the headlines earlier this year when inmates rioted. According to the official version, the "premeditated" riot showed the violent tendencies of the inmates. But according to detainees' accounts, the riot was the culmination of a series of provocations by the guards.

Whatever the truth of the events behind this summer's riots, it is clear that the purposebuilt detention centre - a two-storey red-brick building, tucked away along a quiet Oxfordshire country road - does moved from the relative comlittle to suggest that foreigners fort of Campsfield into a conmight be welcome. The 200 inmates have committed no crimes. And yet, the repeated frisking of all visitors and the a detainee who had complained long list of prohibited items (cig-

are allowed to bring in) are just one reminder that the treatment of Campsfield detainees would be little different if they were

drug-smugglers or thieves. Officially, the inmates of Campsfield (which opened as a detention centre in 1993) are behind bars because they are perceived as being at risk of absconding. In reality, one important purpose seems to be merely to discourage others - at a weekly cost of hundreds of pounds per person. From the Home Office's point of view, the more asylum-seekers who can be persuaded that Britain is not a pleasant place to be, the better.

turning home is considerable. Sylvia comes from Ogoniland in were both the victims of political murder. Her sister was The political context is clear. several members of the family were active in an Ogoni movement which displeased the authorities. Sylvia, who was studying information technology, describes the events in a deliberately steady voice, with only an occasional tremor. She now needs constant medical treatment, related to stress. She is convinced that she would be a target if she returned.

Complainers are routinely punished. Newly released detainees, and those still at Campsfield, say that asking questions immediately gets you ventional prison. The riot in August began with a trivial spark: the transfer to prison of that inmates were not allowed

arettes and phonecards are to watch television. "Every day among the few items that you they abuse you and swear at you," says a recently released

Many at Campsfield give the impression that the spirit has been beaten out of them. Sylvia's uncle recently told her: try to be less totalitarian, what-"Come back - even if it is to die. Better to die at home than to be in prison there." Critics believe that the official policymakers would regard that as a kind of success: it would unambiguously convey the message that the UK is not a welcoming destination.

Hakim, a former Algerian policeman, talks of the political violence in his home country that is now encouraged by the For some, the risk of re- authorities themselves, and which persuaded him to leave. "If you don't kill, you are Nigeria - the native region of killed." He argues that if his case quently used by the private se- the writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, ex- were being considered while he curity guards, when answering ecuted amidst international was living outside, then he es' questions. Odd, too, protests in 1995. Sylvia's parents would feel more like a human being. "How could I abscond?" he asks, "I've nowhere to go."

Paul, an Angolan recently released from Campsfield, argues that the detention centre is intended to be as depressing as possible, "It's harder than at home. They're trying to kill you bit by bit. Your world is the limit - the borders of Campsfield are your borders." He talks of the casual, built-in racism of the system. "When I tried to say something, they would treat me as though I am from the bush. They would say:

'You deserve this treatment'." Immigration policy is full of problems without solutions. Those countries which offer a politically better life usually offer a materially better life, too. It is therefore difficult to disentangle the issues of economic and political asylum. The anti-asylum lobby argues that they are only here in search of more money. The pro-asylum

lobby suggests that asylumseekers are only here because of political freedom. In reality, the two inevitably overlap. There are few Vaclav Havels in the world today - those who selflessly work for their counever the cost. Most are keen to escape for a more complex variety of reasons - including the fear of political violence and

If they are lucky, those reasons are compelling enough for them to be allowed to stay in Britain; if they are unlucky. the fact that they might lose their jobs or their lives if they return home is considered to be merely incidental.

Either way, critics suggest that there is no good reason why the ritual humiliation should continue of those who hope against hope that they will be al-

icy has what one regular visitor to Campsfield calls a "comwhere the quality of mercy is sewho works with released detainees in Oxford, notes that the depressions are made worse by uncertainty. "With a prison sentence, at least you have an idea of how long it's for. At Campsfield, you know nothing."

lowed to stay. The existing polpletely arbitrary" character. verely strained. Annette Hyder, mental issue.

which was worded under the Tory government, was amendpolicy on asylum seekers. ed to drop the call for a total amnesty for all these people. The Bishop of Worcester, the

Right Rev Peter Selby, said the issue was a test "not just of our compassion but a fundamental component of our mission to the country". He warned against the "fear of the stranger" and said Christians must convey the message that "those who entertain strangers may be entertaining angels unawares."

Last week Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, gave a speech to the Refugee Council promisracism and xenophobia, the ing that Labour was bringing a "new spirit of openness" to the Introducing his private asylum issue. He promised that in January Labour would be announcing "policies and practices David Houlding, from the London diocese, condemned the which are well-informed, properly considered, and founded in "fundamental injustices" in the reason and principle". 1996 Asylum and Immigration

But Mr Houlding remains unconvinced, saying: "there has been no clear indication that they will repeal the Act or that they will restore the right to benefit for asylum seekers.

there would always be those The final motion, which was who take advantage of the system or even abuse it, talk of backed unanimously, expressed "bogus" asylum seekers was the Church's continuing concern about the effects of British unacceptable. Nor should the asylum, immigration and narecent arrival of refugees in tionality law. It welcomed the Kent distract from the funda-Government's commitment to a "fairer, firmer system" and He also urged the Government to deal with the backlog called for a law which is "huof the 55,000 asylum seekers in mane and non-discriminatory, Britain who are awaiting a de- and which enjoys the conficision. However, the motion, dence of all our communities."

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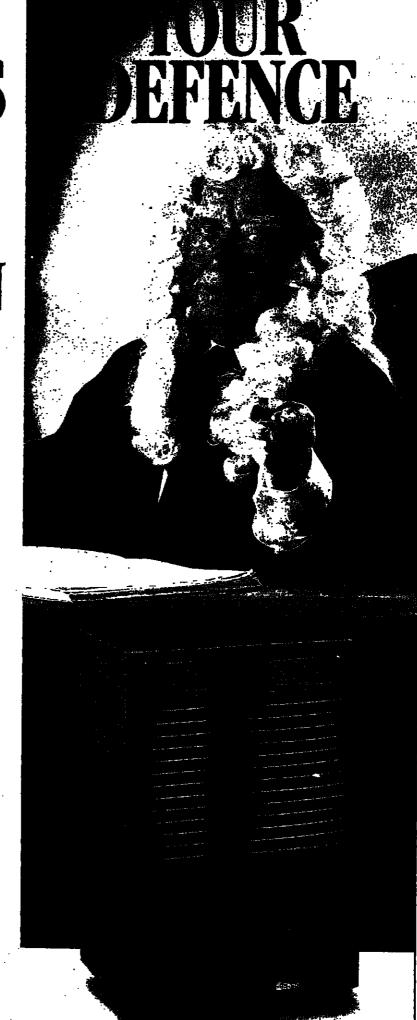
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Greece yesterday issued its bluntest warning yet that it will block Turkey's participation in next February's planned EU enlargement conference in London. Rupert Comwell says the feud threatens to derail one of Britain's most cherished diplomatic initiatives.

The bone of contention, yet again, is the divided island of Cyprus, with whose internationally recognised Greek-Cypriot government the European Union will open entry negotiations next year - to the delight of Athens but the undisguised fury of Ankara, membership the EU has again put on hold.

After talks here with Tony Blair, the Greek Prime Minister, Costas Simitis, was EU countries are happy to have adamant: unless Turkey played by the rules of the European club and dropped its threats to seem to leave scant room for incorporate the Turkish-Cypriot third of the island, "Greece threat," a Foreign Office official is prepared to prevent Turkey admitted last night, "but we have taking part" in the unprece- to hope it can be overcome." dented gathering of current and

aspiring EU member countries. But just a mile away from the Greek embassy residence where drop its attempts to prevent the Mr Simitis was speaking to journalists, a top Turkish diplomat declared that Ankara record and accept the jurisdicwould leave no stone unturned to have the entry negotiations with Cyprus declared illegal because they were in breach of the separate dispute with existing treaties.

Inal Batu, in charge of Cyprus affairs at the Turkish foreign ministry, told a conference on Cyprus that Brussels should put the accession negotiations with the island on hold until both Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities were represented in its government.

For Britain, which aims to make the kick-off of enlargement talks the centrepiece of its EU presidency in 1998, Greece's stance is a major worry, Technically. Britain can invite whoever it likes to the conference, which will open in Buckingham Palace. In practice though, a deal will have to be worked out at the forthcoming EU summit in Luxembourg, which is expected to endorse the European Commission's recommendation that entry negotiations begin whose own application for with Poland, Hungary, the Czech republic, Slovenia, Estonia and Cyprus - but not the eternally jilted suitor Turkey.

Greece apart, most if not all Ankara there. But the conditions set out by Mr Simitis yesterday manoeuvre. This is not an idle

Upping Athens' earlier demands, the Greek prime minister said not only must Turkey negotiations with Cyprus, but it must improve its humans rights tion of the International Court in the Hague - which Greece believes favours its position in Ankara over territorial waters. reasons for staying are still



A woman kissing the hand of Tony Blair during his visit to the Sarajevo market

Troops will stay in Bosnia, Blair says

that he was prepared to keep British peace-keeping troops in Bosnia "to see this thing

through". The Prime Minister flew to Bosnia, ravaged by war between 1992 and 1995, for a sixhour morale-boosting visit to British troops serving with the Nato-led Stabilisation Force

"The reasons for getting in bere in the first place and the

we see this thing through," he declared.

Mr Blair, seeking to underline Britain's commitment to Nato-led peace-keèping operations, flew in through thick fog to Banja Luka, the main town in the Bosnian Serb republic. There, he held a 15-minute meeting at the airport with the Bosnian Serb President, Biljana Playsic, in a show of British support for her leadership.

Mrs Playsic has pledged to abide by the 1995 Dayton peace agreement for Bosnia and waged power struggle against her hardline nationalist opponents.

He toured a huge derelict engineering factory where British troops are housed, and

onto a Challenger tank.

Most of the 5,000-strong British contingent is based in the Banja Luka region. The British soldiers have played a pivotal role in the conflict pitting the Western-backed Playsic against hardliners loyal to Radovan Karadzic, the wartime Serb leader indicted for war crimes.

Hundreds of British soldiers in armoured vehicles surrounded police stations this summer in Banja Luka to enable Mrs Playsic to remove hardline opponents and assert control over police units in the area. British troops were also involved in a shoot-out in the Bosnian Serb town of Prijedor in July, in which one war crimes ate a greasy hot dog before in- suspect was shot dead and anspecting Warrior armoured other arrested and sent for tri-

Tony Blair signalled yesterday here, and I think it is important fighting vehicles and climbing al at the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague.

Mr Blair said that bringing war criminals to justice was an important part of the British role in bringing peace to Bosnia, which he described as "an incredible achievement".

Mr Blair's visit comes a week before Nato defence ministers meet to discuss the future of the Bosnia peacekeeping mission, which has about six mouths left in its 18-month mandate.

Western governments have indicated they intend to extend the peacekeeping operation beyond June 1998, but the precise size and nature of a foilow-on force has yet to be

Banja Luka

Cook goes CAP in hand to EU Union hopefuls

Negotiations to extend membership of the European Union to five former Soviet bloc countries of Central and Eastern Europe will open on 31 March under Britain's chairmanship of the EU, the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, announced yesterday. In Warsaw on the final leg of a three-nation visit to prepare the ground, Mr Cook committed Britain to promoting a radical shake-up of the EU's hugely expensive and inefficient farm policy. The CAP would cause food prices in Poland and the other applicant states to spiral if applied inits present form, he warned.

"The European Union's agricultural policy has major implications for Central Europe ... Why should the Polish shopping basket cost more just because Poland has joined the European Union?"Poland's economy is heavily farm dependent, with more than a quarter of the workforce is employed on the land, but Mr Cook said the CAP must made to respond to the needs of farmers in Eastern Europe as well as those in the existing member-states. If Central European agriculture was to develop, the CAP would have to shift from subsidies for production to direct support for rural communities. Katherine Butler, Worsow

Paris panic over sex killer

Hysteria has spread in Paris after police announced they were hunting a serial killer suspected of killing three women in their homes by slitting their throats after raping them. Media speculation that the killer may have committed other murders and the gory detailed reporting of his crimes have had a big impact in a France used to seeing serial murders as an American phenomenon. The killer, described as North African, athletic and between 25 and 30 years old, apparently followed his victims home and pushed them inside, as there were no sign of forced entry.

Chechens rebuff Yeltsin

The Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, said he planned a goodwill visit to Chechnya in January. But a Chechen official said an empty-handed trip could prompt the break-up of the entire Caucasus. Mr Yeltsin said his aim was to size up the economy, shattered during Russia's 21-month war against Chechnya, and erode separatist tendencies. "I will name only the month - January, though I know the exact day already." Mr Yeltsin said. "This will ... work against our separation." But the Chechen First Deputy Prime Minister, Moviadi Udugov, said Chechnya wanted to see concrete results.

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· AT PAR

Judge quits porn video case

The National Court removed a judge from one of the most sensitive cases in Spain, one involving a sexually explicit video allegedly featuring a muckraking newspaper editor. Judge Javier Gomez de Liano was removed by the court at his own request after it agreed his independence had been compromised by testimony that he himself might be in another videotape that has not been distributed yet.

The action comes a week after Judge Gomez opened the inquiry into allegations that ex-officials of the previous Socialist government produced and distributed a pornographic video to discredit Pedro Ramirez, editor of El Mundo, a

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German PCs get all PC

"Full-bosomed" and "flat-chested" are out. Negroids and indianoids are banned, and German regional accents must remain unrecognised

Such are the new orders of Germany's policepersons, after a purge of their vocabulary by the brigade of political correctness discovered serious shortcomings. A 13-year-old code of approved terminology must now be rewritten with the offending words blacked out. It all started with an inno-

cent-looking complaint from a Lutheran youth group, criticising certain "National Socialist racial classifications" employed by the forces of law and order. People of African origin were routinely described in police files as "negroid", and Indians - not the Native American variety - as "indianoid".

Such a charge is not to be taken lightly and the authorities immediately got to work. Two years on, their long-awaited report has been published and acted upon.

"It's a fair cop," they told the Lutherans. There is to be none of that negroid stuff from now on. Blacks are to be referred to, instead, as afrikanisch.

trolpersons also uncovered other offensive descriptions. All too often, witnesses or suspects were described by inappropriate adjectives, such as "fullbosomed" and "flat-chested". The inspectors also objected to descriptions of regional accents, such as "Pomeranian",

— Imre Karacs, Bonn



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During their exhaustive search, the linguistic pa-

"Silesian" and "East Prussian". But at least Bavaria, the most conservative Land, with the furniest accent to boot, does not have to worry. Arguing that not all Africans are black, the Bavarian interior ministry has opted out of the new guidelines. So, for a while longer, some suspects in Munich will remain "negroid":

flat-chested or otherwise.



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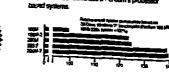
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Cook wants loot to go directly to the survivors

Robin Cook wants to use £40m of gold bullion in the vaults of the Bank of England to compensate victims of the Holocaust and their families. At present, 15 governments whose gold reserves were pilfered during the war want the money. Our Correspondent reports from Warsaw.

CAP in hand on hopefuls

c over sex killer

rebuff Yeltsin

A bleak siding at Umschlagplatz, near the centre of Warsaw, was the last sight of freedom for 300,000 Polish 1942 and 1943, they were tion rounded up, loaded into cattle trucks and transported to

Auschwitz. In biting wind, standing at the same desolate site yesterday, the Foreign Secretary, Robin the Warsaw Ghetto victims, to mourn what he called the "tremendously tragic pointless waste of so much human life".

He also pledged to press the international community to "set the record straight" and end the wrangling which has denied Holocaust survivors and other Nazi victims the right to know what happened to billions in

BY KATHERINE BUTLER

gold and other assets stolen or hidden from them since the war.

The markings of the old railway line are still visible at Umschlagplatz . On the stark white the names of victims it says simply: "Along this path of suffering and death over 300,000 Jews were driven from the Warsaw Ghetto to the ga: chambers of the Nazi extermination camps."

After his visit to the memorial Mr Cook said "Keeping alive the memory of the Nazi victims is our duty, as is repa-

ration to those who survive." Mr Cook used his visit to the memorial to propose the launch of a £40m fund which for the first time would direct help to individual concentrationcamp survivors and their families. Britain wants backing for the reparation fund when representatives of 41 governments gather from Tuesday to try to unravel with historians and other experts the full mystery of gold looted by the Nazis.

"Today some £40m still 16. mains to be distributed. Britain has proposed that the remaining gold be used to set up a fund to compensate individual Holocaust victims and their families. particularly those who so far have received little or no compensation for their suffering".

But the Foreign Secretary also called on participating countries, which include the Swiss and other neutrals whose banks are thought to have hoarded vast amounts of money deposited by Jews before the war, to "set the record straight". questions are resolved."

The three-day conference would have to bring "all the facts into the open," he said. Those who suffered so, yet still survive, deserve to know the full

About 240 delegates from the 41 countries and a number of Jewish organisations will be attending the Nazi-gold conference in London.

The stated purpose of the conference is historical. It will examine where gold looted by the Nazis during the war came from and what happened to it.

It will review what has already been done to make good the losses suffered by countries and to make restitution to individuals. And it will examine Jews. From this spot between the case for further compensa-

Almost \$4bn of gold looted by the Nazis and recovered by the Allies after the war has been handed back to occupied countries such as Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg Cook, laid a wreath to honour whose gold reserves were looted by the Germans.

Some five tonnes of the recovered gold pool - less than 2 per cent - remains in the Bank of England, worth around

It is this symbolic amount that Britain wants to see handed over for the benefit of individual survivors and their

While 15 countries have laid claim to the remaining gold, the proposal from the three -Britain, France and the US which made up the Allied Tripartite Gold Commission after the war, is that governments should relinquish their demands and agree that the money should instead go to individual

Foreign Office research has concluded that of the gold held some must be private assets, in other words smelted-down gold teeth and items of jewellery taken from victims. Allied forces found boards of gold stashed near the concentration camps.

"There is a strong likelihood that some personal gold, including teeth and jewellery, were mixed up with monetary gold," a Foreign Office spokesman said. British officials said the Government would be appealing to the goodwill of participants at the conference rather than on the basis of any legal evidence on the ownership of what remains. "This is a moral question: we have money for distribution, the remaining survivors are getting older. so the next few years will be the last chance to deal with it during their lifetimes," said a spokesman. A minor setback is that a report on British policy towards enemy property frozen in Britain at the end of the war is not yet complete and will be published after the conference. It has been suggested that some assets remain in British banks which could and should have been returned to victims of Nazism. And one official

warned yesterday that the con-

ference should not be seen as

a "quick fix". "At least 10 years'

minimum work is needed on an

international scale before these

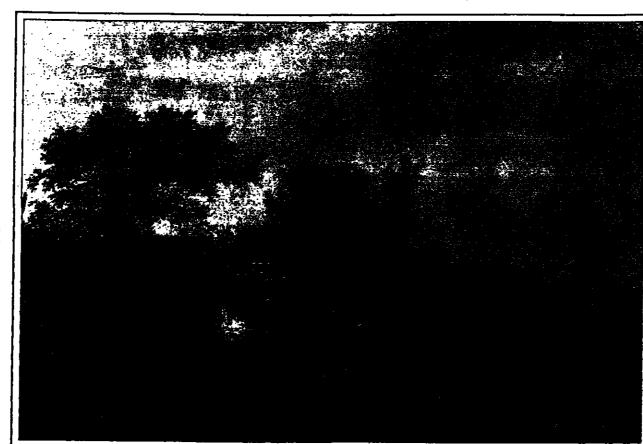
Lenin's Swiss bank account discovered

Swiss bank officials sifting through dormant accounts have waither unexpected discovery. Among those not claimed since Second World War lies an account in the name of Vladimir ev, containing the princely sum of 12.90 Swiss Francs. Recording to yesterday's Neue Züricher Zeitung, this Mr is the very same man who was later to rise to world was Vladimir llyich Lenin. The revolutionary leader lived Windows Vladimir Hydri Lenin The German agents worried about in 200 mutil April 1917, when German agents worried him onto the course of the war on the eastern front bundled him onto a transfereding for Petrograd. The rest, as they say, is history.

Leain had opened his savings account with the Züricher Kantonalbank shortly before that fateful journey. It was from this assumt that he was to pay his membership dues to the

iocalibranch of the Bolshevik party. . Links hasty departure, he took the party with him, but not the account, whose contents have been underpinning Swiss capitalism ever since. One of Lenin's nieces is now claiming the loot, including interest.

__Imre Karacs,



Old Master painting may be handed back

17th-century painting during the Second World War, it will be returned or donated to a museum, the owners said after it was withdrawn from auction.

Peter Henle, son of the German collector Guenther Henle, said in a letter to the London branch of Sotheby's that his family would look for the victim and return the painting if it was stolen.

It was to have been auctioned at next week. The letter was released to The Boston Globe, which first reported the painting's dubious ownership background. Should the victim turn out to be Jewish with no descendants, the letter said, the painting, A dune landscape with two figures by a fence (left). by Jacob van Ruisdael, would be donated to "an appropriate museum or gallery in Israel."

If the Nazis stole a valuable If no evidence of Nazi looting exists and no victim can be found, the family would meet again "to settle the disposition of the picture." The Globe said Sotheby's listed the painting with a notation showing it had been acquired for a museum Hitler planned to build in the Austrian city of Linz.

Guenther Henle, an industrialist and political architect of the post-war Christian Democratic government in Germany, bought the painting in 1961 from the Amsterdam dealer Pietre de Boer, who helped the Nazis obtain 300 paintings during the war.

Ori Soltes, director of Washington's National Jewish Museum, said the Henles' effort "is as correct as one could hope for, and reflects a sensitivity for rapprochement."

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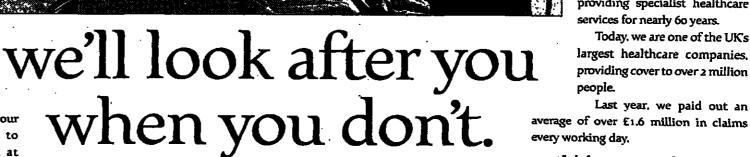
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Will they get us to the wedding on time? Forget France, the assembled Complicite company chose to gather at Audiey End instead

One wedding and, luckily, no one's funeral

Theatre de Complicite are Britain's leading 'physical theatre' company. Who better to bring John Berger's novel 'To the Wedding' to the airwaves? Roger Elsgood, producer of tomorrow night's Radio 3 version, kept a diary of their work in progress.

John Berger is having a thought and, my word, it's a masive one. He's wandering around the intensity that matches the process going on inside. I've seen this happen before but, when it occurs, it's always spectacular. I stand and stare, amazed at this conspicuous display of creativity. He's trying to solve a problem, his problem, our problem: how to re-create his novel To the Wedding as a drama for radio.

It's early March. The first workshop day. We're in an RSC rehearsal room in Clapham – a room big enough

to try out chariot racing. Earlier that day, John had Eurostacred in from Paris with an enormous basket of cherries - "picked from the garden this morning". Waiting to work with him are Lilo Baur (Lucie. in the last Berger/Complicite collaboration, The Three Lives of Lucie Cabrol), Katrin Cartlidge (fresh from starring in Mike Leigh's Career Girls).

a clutch of Complicite actors, director Simon McBurney, coadapter Mark Wheatley and me. I can feel a creative charge in the air and almost hear the distant rustle of expensive leaps of the imagination.

Our first major problem is that both John and Simon want to change the character of the narrator. They feel that a blind Greek tama seller is not what is wanted. But what is? Sitting around the table, we kick around a few ideas punctuated by several longueurs, a few coughs, and no solutions. It's then we become aware of John room clutching his cranium, as circling the room thinking. He's ering. Mercifuly, no re-takes if he's frightened to let it go, on another planet, orbiting with are required. The bad news is the place, the time, us.

Eventually he lands. He's back, only he's talking to himself. "I mean... [long pause] the narrator has to be a ... [pause] - a river! The Po! The longest river in Italy!" Now, why didn't we think of that! Having made three previous

programmes with John, I knew it could be like this, but having never worked with Complicite before, I had no idea of the turns this production would take before it was finished. It was also the first time they had worked as a company for radio. Complicite has built a reputation on the triumphal physicality of its stagings: the hand-held bridge of bamboo poles the cast fashioned in their recent RNT production of Brecht's Caucasian Chalk Circle, created in seconds yet robust enough to allow Juliet Stevenson to walk across: recording. Simon and Judith

the breathtaking interplay with the set that characterised Lucie Cabrol; the involvement by all the cast seemingly at all times; the insistence on teasing out ideas, testing things. Testing me.

Several months later, I found

myself at 10 o'clock at night with a bunch of actors on the beach at Frinton-on-Sea, waiting for Mick Barnfather to run naked into the North Sea. The mere fact of this being radio in no way inhibits the Complicite approach to physical theatre. Mick has been dreading this moment all day and as he waits for Simon's "Action!" even the shingle is shivhe can't find his watch. We borrow a torch from a Frinton night-fisherman, who asks us not to shine it on the water - "the fish don't like it". (The fact that they don't take too kindly to being hauled out of the water and bashed over the head with a cricket bat doesn't seem to worry him.) This unscripted surreal drama is brought to a sad conclusion when we fail to find Mick's watch. The wine-dark sea has claimed it, a gift from his fa-

company for many years. In the same way that Complicite make strange things happen, strange things happen to them. For weeks prior to the

ther and the only casualty of a

very long day that began 50 miles

away at Audley End House.

where we recorded the wedding

scenes with 35 Complicite actors

- the largest gathering of the

cost big money. The budget's go-Dimant, Complicite's administrative producer, have been trying into orbit. I use the time to ing in vain to cast Gino, the record background material. Italian who wants to marry Ni-We need the sound of the monon. Good Italian actors are torbike that Ninon's father Jean rides across France and Italy to hard to find in London in July - they're all in Italy, if they have the wedding. "Nothing less than any sense - and Judith is strug-1000cc," said John on the phone. Outside a café in a tiny village, gling. Sandro Mabellini, a stua gift from the gods, a 1250cc V dent from Florence, once saw a Complicite show and was im-Max Yamaha. "Oui," said pressed. He thought, while he Bernard, at 42 a seasoned was in London, he should get Yamaha man. "BBC? Bien sûr."

himself on their mailing list. With

nothing better to do, he went and

rang their doorbell. "Er, 'ello, I

am, er, a student..." the Com-

plicite intercom crackled with a

distinctly Italian accent. "A dra-

ma student ?" "Yes, a drama stu-

OK?" "Yes, I reada English

OK." And so Sandro Mabellini

walked in off the street and into

a leading role with Complicite.

He couldn't believe his luck. Nei-

ther could we. The perfect Gino.

August night. Not Neil Dia-

mond - and no Complicite. The

original plan was to record the

wedding scenes in the long qui-

et field behind the house. But

that was just a plan and, if

working with Complicite means

anything, it means plans are

made for changing. I get a

phone call from Simon, who is

working on the script with John

in the Alps. They aren't happy.

The script isn't ready. Complicite

are not coming. Simon tells me

that he wants this production to

be one which, on our deathbeds,

we can all look back on as

THE WEEK ON RADIO

something to be proud of.

ROBERT HANKS

South-west France: a hot

stops, starts, slow cornering -Bernard takes us to a long, hot road like somewhere in Easy Rider for the big take, the high-speed pass. We stop at a wayside garage and he explains that he for a gap in the traffic and then - "à l'attaque!" As he vanishes, we set up a DAT machine by the roadside with John Hunt, our sound designer, holding a mike on a fishpole. This has a miraculous effect on passing motorists, who assume we're a speed trap. We take great pleasure in watching a succession of sudden rear brake lights going on. Bernard disappears into the heat haze and we wait. A tiny yellow light appears in the distance. At 225 kph, he's up and at us and out of sight in no time, man and

After doing the easy stuff -

We need to re-create a party in Grenoble circa 1970. Jane. our French fixer, has come up with a willing troupe of local amof supper and as much wine as they can drink, are prepared to 'To the Wedding', 7.30pm to I agree. But this is going to party for us. Amateurs they morrow, Radio 3

machine as one, like John in

Clapham, in a world of his own.

may be but they insist on a full workshop first. Our neighbour, Michel, catches the mood and gives an impromptu seminar. We hear "Marie Quant... le Rollin' Stones... Alexandeur Dubchek.. "appies" punctuating his French. The young aspirants catch on as pacily as he ounches up the past and in no time they are able to transport us to swinging Grenoble. A great take, but one that eventually went to wherever digital sound bytes go when they are deleted. Around lam

our guests begin to leave. Last out is Michel, who five minutes. later is back to tell us that our actors, fuelled with party spirit, have turned their car into a ditch. get closer, see the moonlit lane strewn with a carnage of bodies. It's a full 10 heart-stopping seconds before we realise that the local thespians have used the opportunity to impress us with their acting skills by workshopping everyone's worst nightmare. The Complicite approach is

proving contagious.

Back in London, late September, and everything is finally recorded. In the BBC Maida Vale Studios, not only has Simon got a great sound designer to work with, he's also got the full might of the BBC Radiophonic Workshop. For a director, this is like Christmas and Hamleys rolled into one. Delivery deadlines pass, clocks tick and bills mount. Simon edits on. The reateur actors who, for a buy-out sult is ... out of this world. Listen for vourself.

Cultures clash in a Hispanic kasbah

Royal Court, London

The Royal Court's New European Writers' Season Wilsias the imagination to places and the modes of feeling not normally encountered much in the English theatre. Bazaar, by the talented young Spanish dramatist David Planell, deposits us in the shop of one of Madrid's immigrant Moroccan community and dramatises the cross-generational tensions over cultural integration via a tracknot scheme to win a You Have Been Framed TV competition that involves reshooting a faked version of a real-life biking accident.

Altogether more drily comic and directed with a droll, laconically paced stylishness by Mary Peate, Christophe Pellet's One More Wasted Year is a wintry Gallic shrug of a play that takes a threesome of caféhaunting twentysomethings on a journey into an indifference arguably worse, in its dull, echoing emptiness, than despair.

Around these two full stagings, a series of rehearsed read-

New European Writers . Dave swallowed a whole row of dictionaries of up-to-the-minute "sarf London" street-cred - a relentlessness of register not, I suspect, intended by the original. Rendered into agile, less attention-seeking English by John Clifford, Roxana Silbert's enjoyable staging of Bazaar illustrates the tricky problems of performance protocol. As the 55-year-old Moroccan shopowner whose desperate desire to become an honorary

pencer

Spaniard is questioned by his newly arrived, differently minded nephew, Nicholas Woodeson offers an object lesson in how to evoke the accent and gestures of a member of a disadvantaged cultural minority in a way that is alive to the undignified tragicomedy of the man's position but which also brings out the underlying human dignity. What a great Shylock he would make.

With Adrian Edmondson as the white-trash Spaniard who gets increasingly injured faking the accident, things go slightly astray. He produces riffs of extremely funny acting, but you can't help feeling that his Spanish counterpart would



glimpse of how French theatre responded to the aimlessness of the 1980s in Xavier Durringer's A Desire to Kill on the Tip of the Tongue, a play that focuses on a group of discontents outside a discothèque who are set further at odds by the professional windup merchant in their midst.

Using British actors, translators and directors, the whole season is a fascinating exercise equivalencies (where they exist) of idiom, acting, production style and cultural context. The successes and failures are revealing. To my ear, Mark Ravenhill's version swamped the very fine Durringer piece: the poison-spiked instalments. characters all sound as if they

have more of a false macho front than Edmondson, whose squinty-eyed, runty stage persona is about as high on testosterone as Stan Laurel. The character is weak but surely not as transparently so as here.

The most successful piece is One More Wasted Year, which boasts a wonderful performance from the lanky, charismatic Paul Bettany. He has a quality of Edmonoson's sidekick. Kik May all, about him but a range that can extend to tragic desolation. The experience of watching this beautifully nuanced staging is like being fed a slither of tarte au citron in progressively more

1972 - 19

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Mary Land

Who says that still waters run deep?

Belfast Festival

Poignantly billed as Merce Cunningham's last collaboration with John Cage, this large, peculiar, part-aleatory artefact (whose first staging, in 1994, Cage did not live to see) was devoloped from a set of "starting conditions" laid down by the composer before his death: the title, 90-minute duration and in-the-round floor plan (with the audience ringed by the orchestra), and a soundbank of Cage's ideas, developed

and finished by Andrew Culver. Big as it is (15 dancers, 112 musicians), Ocean looks a little swamped in the vast Waterfront Hall, the circular dance floor, overhung by gargantuan lighting gantries, looking rather remote from the terraces. Even had this not been so, the slow elaborations and overlapping phrases of Cumningham's choreography (created with the aid of a computer program called Lifeforms) has a dreamy, abstract, even minimalist hue, almost

ambient in the way it unfolds. This sense was heavily reinforced by Cage's music. Perched in small bunches in the farthestflung nooks and crannies of the hall, the orchestra (made up of local students) had to cope with "32,067 musical events" - sequences of short pieces played asynchronously without either score or conductor. The result, if half randomised, is far from cacophonous, Instead, it resolves into a diffuse and not altogether discordant drone, punctuated by the odd barp of a horn or timpani crash, and overlaid with the sometimes treated undersea noises and whale moans. It's all pitched at a kind of atmospheric, suspenseful expectancy - although after 20 minutes, you realise

you're getting nowhere fast. Against this rhythmically formless backdrop, the dancers work to their own interior clocks. Clad in body suits that accentuate the gauzy overhead lighting, they introduce themselves in overlapping solos and duets with long phrases of movement broken by held poses, often pirouetting and wheeling around the circular stage. before draining off the floor

down the four exit pathways. Somewhere between Martha Graham and Tai Chi, there is far more elegance than emotion to the choreography. Even in the duets, the dancers are ultimately immersed in their own worlds. The overall picture only really kicks in after an hour with the big group displays, each dancer starting his or her phrase a couple of beats behind the last. serving up eye-dazzling shoals

of complex movement Given Ocean's largely eventless evolution, it helps to get your metabolic rate right down: if you're at all anxious, the clockcounter, displayed on an array of video monitors, is maddeningly unhelpful. That said, I was astonished at the warmth of the crowd's response. And when the septuagenarian Cunningham hobbled on, looking small and footsore on his arthritic ankles. they showered him with whoops of appreciation. It seemed he couldn't get off the stage after that: an utter tramp for the limelight, milking it with give-it-tome flaps of his huge hands. Last perf tonight, 7.45pm Waterfront Hall (01232-334400)

Mic Moroney

THE WEEK IN THE ARTS DAVID LISTER

A week is a long time in museum politics. What started as a well-orchestrated campaign for free admissions by all the great and the good lost its united front yesterday. Alan Borg, director of the V & A, broke ranks, saying that he and the heads of other charging museums would not tolerate extra money being given to the free museums to keep them free and no help being given to the charging museums. He had, after all, only introduced charging out of dire necessity and would keep his museum free if he could.

Could this be the same Alan Borg who told the recent Museums and Galleries Commission conference: "Every survey shows that most museum visitors come from the ABC1 social categories. Free admission subsidises the well-off and tourists."

Apparently it is the same chap. But only apparently. Other museum directors I asked claimed they could only vaguely remember Dr Borg uttering those words and assured me they had to be "contextualised". Why the apparent change in philosophy and communal amnesia?

The violinist formerly known as Nigel was introduced simply as Kennedy when he played the Elgar concerto at the Virgin Megastore in London. Actually Kennedy has never been a great one for first names. When I first met him, he called me Monster throughout our chat, something I still worry about in the small hours. His change of name is suspiciously well timed, publicitywise, for his new recording. It's just a pity be couldn't persuade



the conductor on the recording, Sir Simon Rattle, to join him in ditching first names and titles. Rattle And Kennedy. It does have a certain musical machismo. Simon and Nigel, on the oth-

or hand, is rather less butch.

More revealing is the fact that

K - to give Nige a more Kafkaesque title, and one he might consider adopting for his next CD-chose to perform Elgar at the Virgin Megastore, with a full 80-piece band squeezed into the basement of the Oxford street shop. But there's method in K's mould-breaking. The 500strong audience were surrounded by shelves of discs and plenty of willing salespeople. Some 200 CDs were sold as the concert ended. That's over 10 per cent of the total needed to break into the classical Top 10. all in a few minutes. This was, I suspect, the first of many recordstore concertos.

Culture secretary Chris Smith's proposal that the ENO leave the London Coliseum and share Covent Garden is highlighting the genuine affection people feel for the company. At the end of one of this week's performances of Verdi's Falstaff, a magical production by Matthew Warchus, music director Paul Daniel worked out that 15 out of the 17 performances ENO had played since Smith made his announcement had attracted audiences too large to fit into any other London theatre. Sometimes statistics can provide the most eloquent argument of all.

Auntie Beeb's in a radio daze would have severely strained shoulder-muscles from the amount of time it spends patting

itself on the back. You probably thought you'd seen the end of the splurge of self-congratulation that accompanied the Corporation's 75th anniversary, but the nostalgia drags on and on. This week alone, Radio 2 has offered From the Editor's Postbag on Sunday, an hour-long selection of letters to the Radio Times with humorous links by Barry Took, and, on Wednesday, the first instalment of Auntie's Family Album, in which minor celebrities (Bill Oddie, for heaven's sake) select favourite BBC moments.

Listening to these was an extremely irritating experience, not so much because of anything they contained (Bill Oddie apart) but because the whole mood seems so out of key with the atmosphere at the BBC. Just the title of Auntie's Family Album sets the teeth on edge: why don't they call it "Please, please, love us, we're ever such a nice, cuddly broadcasting corporation and not at all a soulless bu-

If the BBC was a person, it its raison d'enc" and have done lar radio drama in the last quarwith it? Apart from the fact that the billing would take up too

much space in the Radio Times. At the moment, doom and loathing hang about the doors to Broadcasting House like a couple of psychotic night-club bouncers. Radio 4 producers have recently heard the results of this autumn's "selling round" - the first time they have had to "sell" programme ideas to the new commissioning editors (who are, you recall, each responsible for a different time of day). Under the new structure, several producers, including some of the BBC's most distinguished names, have sold no programmes at all; the fact that the had news is now spread by e-mail

hasn't increased their sense of the corporation's cuddliness. Horror stories abound: one producer is supposed to have proposed a feature on Rimbaud and got back the answer "Who's Rimband?" Kate Rowland, head of drama, is rumoured to have been told by one of the new editors that he would never have commissioned Spoonface Steinreaucracy that has lost touch with berg - probably the most popu- but his courage is admirable.

ter of a century - but "some things slip through the net".

The best story I've heard has Producer A approaching Producer B: A was supposed to be travelling with Andy Kershaw to some war zone, but his editor was worried the project was dangerous, and he wanted B's advice. B said he didn't think anybody was likely to get killed; and A said, "No, you don't understand: the editor is worried that Kershaw might be dangerous - he thinks he's a bad influence."

Kershaw certainly does his damnedest. He turned last week's Pick of the Week (Fri/Sun, R4) into an hour-long snipe at the BBC's management - for axing The Asternoon Shift, for elbowing Mark Radcliffe out of the Radio 1 breakfast slot, for ignoring the virtues of the World Service (a much better 24-hour news channel than the one they've just set up), for spending hundreds of thousands of pounds on a logo redesign any 11-year-old could have done in 10 minutes on his PC. I don't always admire Kershaw's taste, lewd-sounding comments of David Tudor's electronically

Spencer is back - but this time no applause

Somebody called it 'the divorce of the decade' which is, of course, wrong. His sister and brother-inlaw hold that title. But certainly it is compelling, combining modern miseries and old-fashioned aristocratic fecklessness. Perhaps, says Glenda Cooper, that is the Spencers' lot.

There is no real contest for bad man of the week. Earl Spencer is that man. The details of the divorce case being played out in South African court are epic. The numbers alone are startling: it is alleged that he had 12 affairs in five months. He is said to be worth £100m and was attempting to fob off Victoria, his wife of five years, with £300,000. What he is alleged to have done and said to her is as shocking as it is

Yet it is less than three months since Charles Edward Maurice, the Right Honourable ninth Earl Spencer, was hailed as a sort of national hero; on the day of his sister's funeral, an occasion which he did not allow his wife to attend, his tribute was so moving and so perfectly captured the mood of the country. In it he attacked the Royal Family in scarcely veiled fashion and lambasted the press in round terms. Among the striking things about this week is the press's relish at his discomfiture and his remarkable insensitivity to his wife problems, including the same eating disorders that afflicted Diana.

How could a man who could articulate the grief and anger many felt at Diana's death so accurately, be so stupid that he could tell his wife at a particularly vulnerable time that he had never really loved her or tell such dreadful jokes about sticking with her through thick and thin - "she was thin and certainly thick".

The divorce case has, of course, made tremendous viewing. His wife turned up with one of his former mistresses Chantal Collopy on the first day of the hearing. ("He's the sort of man who makes women unite against him," said another former flame Sally-Ann Lasson).

Then the countess alleged that he had had slept with 10 or 12 women in the five month she spent at the exclusive Farm Place Clinic in Surrey, where she was treated for drink problems and anorexia nervosa.

Her lawyer added that Earl Spencer told his wife their marriage was over as he lay in the bath, saying "he didn't love her any more and she was no good as a wife". In a letter sent to his "paramour," Mrs Collopy, (reproduced opposite) the Earl described himself as "vicious, cruel and a

bully" towards Victoria. Not that the Earl's side let his wife have it his own way. The Countess could not have the £3.75m she demanded because she wouldn't be able to cope with it, said the Earl's lawyer. Leslie Weinkove told the judge: "There is a question mark over her ability to manage such an award, given that she has a 12-step approach to life dealing with each problem day to day." (a reference to the "Twelve Step" programme of self-help addiction recovery).

Then at the end of the fourth day of the acrimony between himself and Frances and couple's divorce hearing, David Horton-Fawkes, the manager of Lord Spencer's Althorp estate in Northamptonshire, spoke out on behalf of his friend saying Countess Spencer had been persuaded to launch a "malicious" campaign against her husband in the hope of financial gain.

lys that st

run deep!

"Far from claiming he was brutal, she lovingly and touchingly thanked him for his tolerance and support," he said.

Part of this obsession with his divorce has been our fascination that the rich - especially the aristocratic rich - are different. When Lady Spencer's lawyer expresses horror at only being offered £300,000 for a house and says she would only be able to "get a house in a very unattractive distant suburb with problems, perhaps, of crime", the rest of us roll our eyes.

But mainly Earl Spencer had set himself up for it. He took on the press so nakedly at the time of his sister's death - he called his sister "the most hunted person of the modern age", accused editors of having blood on their hands and concluded 'my own and only explanation is that genuine goodness is threatening to those at the opposite end of the moral spectrum". The media, cowed by the flak they took at the time of Diana's death, had been skewered by the Earl more than anyone else. This week was

payback time. How can a man intelligent enough to construct the tribute at Diana's funeral be stupid enough to try to get a gagging order to stop the press reporting the divorce hearings. And how was it that a man who could sum up Diana so accurately - childlike, insecure and helping others as a way of improving her self-esteem - could be so cruel

to his own wife? Part of this at least lies in his own upbringing. The nation may feel that they have been unfortunate in having the dysfunctional Windsors as the Royal Family . But we should think ourselves lucky we didn't

get the Spencers. Charles the youngest Spencer was only four when his mother Frances Shand Kydd left home. He developed a fear of the dark and would cry: "I want my Mummy. I want my Mummy."

His father Johnny had bullied Frances and had forced her to take gynaecological tests when she did not produce the all-important heir. Charles was the fifth child of the marriage - an earlier son had died.

During the divorce Johnny made no attempt to hide from his children the



Brotherly love: Earl Spencer reading the tributes to Diana at her resting place at Althorp in Northamptonshire

Photograph: David Jones

fought tooth and nail to get custody of the children whom he then left to be brought up by nannies and au pairs. When he married for a second time to the-then Raine liked), he left it to Charles's headmaster at Eton to tell him that they had married.

Add to the casual cruelty that he had seen his father display to his mother, Charles was also brought up as heir - not only an earldom but a house and 8,500-acre Northamptonshire estate. Anachronistic as toria. I've been callous it may sound he was part of something that and vicious, trying to had been in his family for generations. Hostility to "acid Raine", as he and Diana life. She deserves betnamed their stepmother, was due in part ter than that - a good to her selling off family heirlooms.

Victoria Spencer produced children at a

made the dynasty secure.

Is it any wonder that Charles Spencer vicious and a bully to

Victoria: the full text revealed something more self-aware. He had actually written: "I feel a dreadful bully to Vicforce her out of my

Like her mother-in-law before her, and help her deal with her shortcomings." rapid rate - four children in four years until the birth of Louis, Viscount Althorp ing divorce, I can at least prevent the un-

pleasantness that accompanied it.[

His tribute to Diana was masterful and seems to have no idea how to behave to his attack on the Royal Family exact: his women? And yet be is not entirely in- references to "blood family", his insinuasensitive either. His wife's lawyers said that tion that for the first time Diana had found Dartmouth (who Charles had met and dis- in a letter he had admitted being callous, joy in her private life, her eating disorders brought on during

her marriage. The

Yet Charles

Prince of Wales It would be wrong stood accused. simply to demonise the Windsor appears to Earl. Like Diana he has have treated his wife been squashed into a less cruelly than mould he doesn't fit Charles Spencer. He did not quibble

over the divorce, he man, who will love her, give her security appears to have kept his one mistress discreet. His bad press came in part from an Writing of his parents he added: "If I orchestrated campaign against him; Charles Spencer, one feels, has brought a lot of trou-

But then the Earl has been sketched in bold lines. He has been a cartoon character to the press right from the very beginning. Within a month of reaching Magdalen College, Oxford (where he got a 2:1 in history), one contemporary remembers he had already made the pages of the university newspaper Cherwell as part of his exploits with the dining club the Bullingdon, who had smashed up a restaurant in Thame. He

But it would be wrong simply to demonise the Earl. Like Diana he has been squashed into a mould he doesn't fit. He is a man of some intelligence who

and his dicey friends have made regular ap-

pearances in newspapers since.

has at times behaved like a completely stupid and insensitive pillock.

Like most of us he is inconsistent and sometimes stupid. He certainly has the capacity to surprise us. He has done it twice in three months.

The Earl as poet and pundit: the tribute at Diana's funeral

I stand before you today, the representative of a family in grief, in a country in mourning, before a world in shock. We are all united, not only in our desire to pay our respects to Diana but rather in our need to do

For such was her extraordinary appeal that the tens of millions of people taking part in this service all over the world, via television and radio, who never actually met her, feel that they, too, lost someone close to

Without your God-given sensitivity, we would be immersed in greater ignorance at the anguish of Aids and HIV sufferers, the plight of the homeless, the isolation of lepers, the random destruction of landmines. Diana explained to me once that it was her innermost feelings of suffering that made it possible for her to connect with her constituency of the rejected.

And here we come to another truth about her. For all the status, the glamour, the applause, Diana remained throughout a very insecure person at heart, almost childlike in her desire to do good for others so she could release herself from deep feelings of unworthiness, of which her eating disorders were merely a symptom.

The world sensed this part of her character and cherished her for her vulnerability, while admiring her for her honesty.

She would want us today to pledge ourselves to protecting her beloved boys William and Harry from a similar fate, and I do this here, Diana, on your behalf. We will not allow them to suffer the anguish that used regularly to drive you to tearful despair. And, beyond that, on behalf of your mother and sisters, I pledge that we, your blood family, will do all we can to continue the imaginative way in which you were steering these two exceptional young men, so that their souls are not simply immersed by duty and tradition but can sing openly, as you planned.

We ... like you, recognise the need for them to experience as many different aspects of life as possible to arm them spiritually and emotionally for the years ahead.

The Earl as a selfish sensualist: his love letter to Chantal

Do I want to spend the rest of my life with you? Yes. When I was with you, everything is so clear.

You've been wonderfully patient with me and as for sensible - well, you couldn't have been more wise and considerate. For someone who's screwed up a major part of his life by charging into something he feared and didn't understand - marriage - your control ... has prevented me repeating my error.

I feel sorry for Victoria, for Don and for all six children involved. I never intended to put my children through the hell of a divorce, but I hope these divorces will be more civilised than that of my parents ...

I feel a dreadful bully to Victoria. I've been callous and vicious, trying to force her out of my life. She deserves better than that - a good man, who will love her, give her security and help her deal with her shortcomings ...

It is a time of turmoil, but the potential for happiness is there and neither of us is happy at present.

Deep down, I've always known my marriage was a mismatch, a terrible error, an impulsive whim that I compounded by adding more and more children to my family. There have been good times, but the bad ones have been chillingly awful. I'm not sure whether Victoria can remember them all, but I can, and I never want to go through such desperate lows again.

Part of the problem has been having an immature wife, one who is incapable of dealing with a husband with a strong character, except by going on hunger strike, an alcohol binge, or resorting to drugs. The other side of the problem is that I cannot deal with a woman who does these things to herself and I can't respect such negative reactions and therefore found my love drifting away. There wasn't an abundance of it in the first place.

THE EARL'S WOMEN







The Earl's wife Victoria (centre) and his mistresses Sally-Ann Lasson (left) and Chantal Collopy, to whom he revealed the truth of his marriage



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In certain primitive societies, there is an annual festival around the time of the winter solstice. The people fear that, unless they spend lots and lots of money in shopping temples, they will close, never to open again. They would then, according to ancient myth, be condemned to exist in darkness, unable to take part in the life-giving ritual of buying unnecessary plastic objects (which will be paid for in the afteriife). They believe that, at this time of year, they must crowd together in these shopping temples and engage in traditional rituals known as browsing just-looking and searching for things without knowing what they are looking for. The people fear that unless they find suitable offerings to make to the other members of their tribe, consumerism as they know it will collapse, and the gods of their religion will be angry.

Thus most of the ceremonies are conducted in a trance-like state of anxiety and exhaustion, after which entire societies come to a halt for 12 days of rest, recuperation and over-eating.

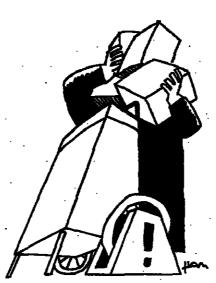
Welcome, then, to No Shopping Day, a heresy as yet subject to contempt and ridicule, but which is destined to overthrow the ancient superstitions. It is not as if anyone enjoys the orgy of commercialism and consumption: it is just that no one can even

conceive of stopping it.

The country divides into those who on becoming aware of the onset of December (that's Monday, for those who have been busy) feel a chill of terror in the pit of their stomach, and those who know they have already ticked cousin Brian off their list. At one extreme end of the spectrum are the true phobics, mostly male, who have been known to return from six hours of "shopping" empty-handed apart from a book which they bought for

They are capable of doing this on Christmas Eve in the morning and having to return to the temples in the evening (which of course is the best possible time as they are almost deserted). At the other extreme are the super-rationalists, mostly female, who drew up a list in October and have already ordered everything from a catalogue. The rest of us muddle through the middle, a list of half-thoughts on a scrap of paper in one hand and a vague recollection that the average child receives £75-worth of presents at the back of the mind.

Of course, it is possible to restrain the arms-race of Christmas spending through mutual non-aggression pacts between



adults, although the negotiations could be more delicate than any Start Treaty.

But it is the children who make any deescalation really difficult. The television advertising has been running for weeks and the anticipation is already rising. Hardened tiny cynics who give every appearance of testing Jack Straw's under-10s curfew to the limit reveal a touching faith in the corporeal reality of Santa's sleigh, loaded with its improbable cargo.

The only thing that can make the shopping treadmill bearable for many is the mental picture of happy, smiling primary-school-age faces.

That, and the prospect of having a go on the Scalextric or computer game, can inure adults to walking around endless shops with that detestable modern catchphrase, "shop until you drop", echoing in our minds.

We may not like the commercialism, but who can say that they have never gained some pleasure from buying presents?

This is where the green case starts to become confused. Charles Secrett, the earnest director of Friends of the Earth. tried to sound jolly on the radio yesterday, saying No Shopping Day was supposed to be "fun".

Well, it didn't sound fun, it sounded tall-hat puritanical. The "No Shop", a Friends of the Earth stunt, is a tempting window design advertising all manner of 'special offers". But the space inside contains images of empty shelves, a "No Sales Assistant" and a cash register. Visitors receive a shopping bag and a receipt which thanks them for "Not Shopping at No Shop". The aim is said to be "to get the message across that going on an orgy of shopping is not going to save precious re-sources". This is the kind of vomitinducing moralising that gives greens a bad

Yes, most people buy more than they need. Our lifestyles are not sustainable. But Christmas shopping, for children at least, is the fun bit. It is just the mechanics that can be so tiresome. Let's do all the boring green things like put in energysaving lightbulbs and give up the car, but let the children have a few large boxes of non-renewable plastics on the one big day of the year.

The important difficulty is how to get the boxes home and stashed in hidden places without hitting the out-of-town Toys R Us and putting the loot in the boot of the Volvo.

What we need is a green home delivery service, so that presents can be requested by mail order and delivered. under conditions of great secrecy in the middle of the night. Preferably by air, using an environmentally friendly mode of transport. By a big friendly bloke with a beard and red coat.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Museum charges

Sir: There is no statistical evidence whatsoever to prove that visitor numbers to our museums decreased after charging was introduced. In fact figures quoted in David Lister's article "Museum's which charge lose a third of visitors" (27 November) are fictitious.

Before charging was introduced, without an electronic ticketing system, there was simply no accurate way of counting visitors. Visitor numbers were grossly over-estimated, unaudited and often "best guesses".

We are not advocating charging for museums per se, but all museums are expensive to run and none of them has been properly funded by government for years. However, we believe that charging for admission does not stop people from visiting museums. The report of recent research commissioned by the Museums and Galleries Commission (the Government's advisers on museum policy) said that "any reported impacts of charges on visitor numbers are of questionable reliability".

Only 4 per cent of those questioned in this research who did not visit museums cited admission charges as the deterring factor. Moreover, a clear majority expects to contribute to museums' finances according to use, and lack of time to visit museums is a much greater con-

straint than an admission charge. Whatever the Government's decision it must provide adequate funding for all national museums and galleries, instead of subjecting them to the miserable cheese-paring of the last share for both educational and decade. If charging were abolished, and the revenues not completely compensated by government, the results would he disastrous. No more effective way of denying access to the public could be imagined. Dr NEIL CHALMERS Director, The Natural History Museum ROBERT CRAWFORD

Director, Imperial War Museum JOHN FREEBORN Deputy Director, The Royal Air Force Museum RICHARD ORMOND Director, The National Maritime Museum London SW7

Care after school

Sir: There is a huge emphasis on after-school care for the single parent. Our club in Milton Keynes operates as a parent co-operative. Children from "two-parent families" are equally welcome, as they also benefit from after-school play and communal activities.

Quite rightly there are grave concerns over provision of suitably trained staff. Over the past three years I have had great difficulty in attracting applicants of the right calibre. The UK ungeted at the expansion, training dervalues the role of the playworker. Whilst we welcome any training initiative from the Gov- and children's welfare stay at the ernment, I hope it won't deteriorate into a way of keeping young people occupied and off the unemployment register while Association they find something better.



A dinosaur skeleton overlooks the turnstiles at the Natural History Museum

Photograph: John Yoos

article "Harman's after school care dream holed by lack of staff" (27 November) refers to clubs running in "schools, community centres, youth clubs and church halis". In the brave new world of Milton Keynes, our schools are modern and do not lend themselves to multiple use of the facilities. Open-plan classrooms are impossible to

play purposes. MARILYN MOFFAT Chair, Management Committee Heronsgate After School Milton Keynes Buckinghamshire

Sir: Everyone involved in lobbying for better child care will welcome the Government's £300m investment in a national childcare programme (report, tribution of child care, to say 26 November). But if the plans are to work, they must be built on the foundations that are already in place.

In the UK, the majority of child care for the under-eights - including before- and afterschool care - is provided by registered childminders working in their own homes. These carers are the backbone of Britain's childcare economy. They are particularly important for lone parents, who value the individual attention and continuity of

care childminders can offer. While an expansion of afterschool clubs is to be welcomed. all parents have the right to choose the best type of care for their children, and my association will be lobbying hard for a part of the new investment to be tarand support of registered childminders so that parental choice top of the political agenda. GILL HAYNES National Childminding

I hope that due concern is Sir: Mothers who wish to stay given to accommodation. Your at home should be paid to look after their pre-school children.

Carmen Fielding's article "Why working life is not always a bed of roses" (27 November) is realistic and poignant. I am also a working mother; however I have five children, and with each one have experienced different periods of maternity leave, culminating most recently in a year.

The decision by Harriet Harman to invest millions of pounds in child care encourages the view that the separation of a child from its parents is not only natural but desirable. The result will be even more mothers forced through poverty to work in order to pay someone else to look after their young children.

For those mothers who wish to stay at home this amounts to an inefficient disnothing of the effects on their children of impoverished parenting_

CAROLYN BUTLER London SW5

Sir. I am a single parent from the "not so deserving" category outlined by Lynne Reid Banks (letter, 27 November). Thankfully I am in work, and

supporting myself and my son. Unemployment is unfortunately a possibility for us all. Does Lynne Reid Banks object to her taxes supporting more traditional families when unemployed?

I am more than happy for my taxes to go on supporting women or men struggling to bring up their families. CAROLINE BUCKNALL London N4

Post letters to Letters to the Editor

and include a daytime telephone number.

Fix 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk

E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Deer hunters

Sir: William Petrie (Letters, 27 November) is wrong to imply that hunting deer with hounds imposes the same stress that they suffer when preyed on by wolves. Wolves hunt by ambushing their prey, and a deer's muscles are geared towards short sprints to escape this kind of attack. Deer are ill-adapted to long chases; hence the muscle damage and other indications of stress and severe OHFGUILLEBAUD exhaustion detailed in the Bate-

son Report. Where deer populations need to be controlled, the least stressful options are shooting by a trained marksman, or immuno-contraception - a technique used successfully in the US for the past eight years but given precious little attention in

this country. NIGEL GOODWIN School of Biology University of Nottingham

Sir: All field sportsmen and women regard their sport as a wildlife conservation measure. Where hunting is banned and the sporting value to the community of red deer is thereby destroyed, the animals are reduced to the status of vermin. Yet The Independent chooses to see the resulting slaughter as "a propaganda exercise ("Bloody

November). Beast for heast, red deer destroy more crops than domestic stock do. They eat, trample and lie on large acreages of growing crops of hay and corn. West Country farmers are not agribiz barons. Without the hunt to move on the deer, the damage becomes more lo-

Revenge for stag hunt ban", 25

calised and concentrated. They can hardly be blamed for protecting their crops, and incidentally harvesting legally the stock which they have harboured and fed, before the poachers from the towns get them. The lucrative venison market attracts armed and vialent men: remove the sporting incentive and local people will not risk violence on dark nights in unrewarded wildlife protec-

Chelwnham.

Public lives

Sir: David Aaronovitch ("The right not to be known". 26th November) takes his argument for personal privacy too far.

If celebrities, such as Michael Hutchence and Paula Yates, systematically titillate their tabloid and television public with details of their private lives, it is neither surprising nor unreasonable that their chosen public should exhibit a prurient interest in the circumstances of an untimely death,

The case of Earl Spencer a successful career, and all this and reports of his divorce process is different. This man took the occasion of the memorial service for his sister, Diana, with a huge global audience, not only to castigate the media whose attentions she had so assiduously encouraged, but also to affirm the dutiful dedication of her "blood family", with thinly-veiled criticism of the Royal Family's treatment of her. He fuelled the then pre-Norwich

vailing popular hysteria. I am not an admirer of the House of Windsor, I do, however, despise humbug, and I consider the Spencer story entirely legitimate "public interest". It is proper that his treatment of his wife and family be available for comparison. M J KNIGHT Langley, Berkshire

Everest politics

Sir. I fully agree with Ed Douglas's opposition to the Chinese occupation of Tibet ("Everest climbers urged to join Tibet boycott", 26 November). It is also grossly unfair that most of the money spent by expeditions to climb Everest goes into government coffers rather than to the local communities, whether that be in Nepal or Tibet.

However, calling for a boycott of the mountain will remove a major source of income from the Sherpa villages that supply porters to climbing expeditions, thus damaging these communities. While some commercial expeditions do exploit these people, there are companies which don't: co-operatives which pay them fairly.

An example of climbers the Himalayan Trust, created by Edmund Hillary, which has helped to build schools and medical centres and to rebuild the Thyangboche monastery after a fire in 1989.

Most of the climbers I know are not complacent about the Tibet issue and do oppose the Chinese occupation. Boycotting the mountain will not make the Chinese leave, but may well cut off a valuable source of income for the local peoples and stop one of the groups best placed to publicise the effects of the invasion from doing so. PETE JOHNSON

Causes of anorexia

Sir: Whilst applauding Dr Dee Dawson for the sentiments expressed in her speech to the Girls' Schools Association ("Let children cat crisps, says doctor", 28 November), I feel that by concentrating on the nutritional needs of children she is diverting attention from the main issue regarding the onset of eating disorders.

We need to look further than an apparent desire to emulate supermodels or a striving for physical fitness. Eating disorders are more commonly caused by the sufferers' own perceived lack of ability to measure up to the stringent expectations set by our highly competitive society, of achieving high academic standards and with apparent ease. In these days of school league tables, teachers must be alert to the needs of these sensitive and perfectionist pupils who frequently are an asset to their schools but at great cost to themselves.

Since food is the means by which life is sustained, its denial can be a resignation from the pressures of life itself. PENELOPE BAILY Newmarket House Clinic

Sticky issue

Sir: Is the glue on stamps and envelopes made from animal carcases? I've stopped eating burgers but don't know whether to lay off correspondence as

JASON GATHORNE-HARDY

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Please do not eat the newspaper. Most striking letter of the week wings in from Upper Poppleton from David McMillan, who explains that he was woken in the night by the whining of his dog, a two-year-old lurcher bitch and went to investigate: "I could hardly believe my eyes. Her normally skeletally-thin features had ballooned enormously. so much so that she could not even open her eyes; she looked like a Staffordshire Bull Terrier after serious dental work."

It was entirely caused. according to Mr McMillan's vet, 'by her having chewed a tiny corner of yesterday's Independent" even though she had chewed the paper earlier in the year "to no ill there is some horrible new constituent in the ink and suggests we warn readers with dogs and children: "Meanwhile, I'll try to ensure that it's just me who devours your otherwiseexcellent newspaper."

Well, I've investigated. The people at both our print sites, in Oldham and Watford, say there's been no change in the ink they have used for - well, decades. It's the usual mixture of pigs' blood, old motorway tar, Stout, bottled phlegm and minced bin-liners that it's always been. Nothing wrong

there. Nutritious, even. Seriously, though, the ink hasn't changed and isn't toxic. It is apparently a mineral, oil-based substance, with carbon floating in it and, as one of the Oldham managers pointed out, "My lads would go mad if there was anything dangerous in it; we breathe and eat the damned stuff all the time." Vet: you owe that man a refund.

My advice would nevertheless be not to eat the paper, at least not regularly. The habit is probably widespread. Our esteemed political columnist, "Don" Macintyre, is famous in the

trade for his habit of unconsciously consuming paper as an aid to moral speculation. He once ate an entire typewritten story, in the days before computerised newsrooms, without noticing, and on one occasion is said to have caused an argument in a restaurant about the bill, having absent-mindedly devoured a five-pound note lying on the table. Anyway, as newspapers go, The Independent is pretty toothsome - the flavour is slightly nutty, with a whiff of mushroom. But for addicts, a tip: much the same effect can be found by keeping packets of Bath Oliver biscuits open for a couple of weeks.

One of the tasks of this paper's editor has been to section of the readership. One of the benefits of reading The Independent is, I like to think, the invigorating effect of experiencing occasional but extreme spasms of rage at breakfast, thus flushing out the toxins and giving the heart a bit of timely exercise. On the foxhunting issue we have clearly surpassed ourselves. I have had almost equally angry letters from pro-hunt and pro-fox readers.

Why are we not on the side of the righteous? Why don't we stand up for minorities? This has not been a debate which allows much space for subtlety. But here, yet again, is our position. We dislike hunting. The Independent is not staffed by Jorrocks-like chaps with purple faces and a good seat. But at the same time we are a mildly libertarian paper and don't approve of it being banned or criminalised by the Government. We want it to die away because of the actions of landowners and a change in fashion. How, some of you ask, is it possible to be against something and also against banning it? Oh Voltaire, we need you back.

Andrew Marr

QUOTE UNQUOTE

During the later years of this Parliament, I will be one of many MPs getting help with my fuel bills. Thank you, kind Chancellor, but the bribe is not generous enough to buy my vote - Kenneth Clarke, former chancellor, whose wife will be 60 three years from now

Unless this rocket man comes down in price, we will be taking a walk down the yellow brick road on this one - Andrew Giangolla, publisher's spokesman, on claims that Elion John's manager is seeking £8m for his life story

I simply cannot believe that all those letters I have received pleading for the fox are written by people who understand that they are advocating, in practice, a means of killing which is slower, more painful, less certain than hunting - Michael Heseltine, who opposes the anti-hunting Bill

Prozac is the drug of choice for glum PC sentimentalists unable to face the spiritual deficiencies at the heart of their own decaying liberalism - Camille Paglia, US feminist icon I will not be the last Tory MP to fall for a pretty woman and

so it is no use party activists telling MPs to do up their trousers - Piers Merchant, ex-Conservative MP I am not a womaniser - Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the

Wate edi



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TOUR Later

23/COMMENT

A sure-fire cure for fouling dogs – and fouler commuters



mbugs

DAVID **AARONOVITCH** ZERO TOLERANCE

The woman solicitor from Cleveland was clearly shocked. Policing in her area, she told the reporter from the Today programme, had become far too tough. Under the zero tolerance regime of Detective Chief Inspector Ray Mallon (I think he's a DCI. Or is that what Helen Mirren was?) constables cracking down on minor felonies had taken to interpreting their orders a little too literally. And yes, she could give plenty of horrifying examples. "One man," she wailed uncomprehendingly, "was CSsprayed for urinating in the street."

And - along I suspect with a million others - my first reaction was "good". I was glad that this chap urinating in the street had been sprayed. In fact my only worry was that the punishment failed to fit the disgusting crime. It would have been more appropriate had the entire Cleveland police force gone round to this man's flat and relieved themselves on his stair carpet and stereo. But still, a good CS spraying was a

I mean it. Readers may recall the incident when a south London car breaker a verminous wretch if ever there was one - smashed his way into a parked Sierra, and was promptly shot by the IRA gunman who, by unlucky coincidence, had been sleeping on the back seat surrounded by blankets, Semtex and Brownings. For one moment many of us saw the attractions of summary justice, and wondered whether we couldn't find alternative employment for the odd Volunteer when the Troubles finally came to an end. A couple of shootings, and the cars in your street would be firm and pregnant, observing no smoking safe for a generation. On second thoughts,

Actually, the micturating Northeasterner is only one of the many types of minor miscreants that I am happy to see given a taste of Belfast Aftershave. I have had some small successes with the local non-scooping dog-walkers, springing out at dawn on the least tough-looking of them and asking why they don't get their animals to do that (pointing) in front of their own houses. They bluster and claim they were completely unaware of their pooches' actions and to sit on seats covered in crud? Pssttt!

(whereas, in truth, they plan the defecation like a military operation), but they do not

Now - this victory behind me - I wish to wage war on another front. First, before I reveal my target, it is important that we agree about the salience of all this. Put simply, the more we tolerate impolite, antisocial and abusive behaviour, the worse it will get. It is true that modern society throws up all kinds of situations where the etiquette is not quite clear or has yet to develop. That's why there are so many arguments about where and when one can politely use

a mobile phone or have one's pager go off. But it is also true that there are many circumstances where we know perfectly well what the rules are, or oughi to be, but where they are being broken with increasing impunity. And it is this that represents a slide away from considerate and polite behaviour, towards rude and ultimately criminal

So what is my new target? Well, I do not like people who either fail to hold heavy doors open for those behind them, or who fail to thank those who open doors for them. They must wait, however. For the fastest growing incivility that I see around me is those people who put their feet up on the seats of trains,

Now, when I was a teenager, with long hair, a combat jacket with "Yanks Out of Vietnam" written on it in Magic Marker and a rebellious attitude, I would not have dreamed of resting my desert boots on the seat opposite. Quite prepared to risk coitus interruptus, anxious to try cunnilingus (and able to spell it), happy to. smoke the occasional joint and to hurl abuse at the American embassy in Grosvenor Square, I drew the line at placing my dirty shoes somewhere that my fellow citizen would have to sit. And, even if I hadn't, a guard or a stolid member of the working classes would soon have put me

What a falling off there has been since then! Last week, when travelling on the London Underground, I discovered that the seat upon which I wished to rest was already occupied by the muddy platforms of a pudgy young woman with frizzy hair and a preemptive scowl. I waved vaguely at her legs with my furled copy of The Independent at which, giving me a look of complete contempt and uttering a seismic sigh, she slid her shoes slowly down from the upholstery. At that moment I wanted nothing more than that Ray Mallon should get on the train and pssstttt, zap her right in the kisser.

The terrible thing is, that if this young lady cannot see why she is wrong in this instance, she is also unlikely to worry about littering the streets, standing up for the insigns and singing Spice Girl numbers at the top of her tuneless voice at midnight outside the houses of decent couples with three

l am familiar with the usual arguments against taking stern action. But would the world really be such a boring place, so staid and unexciting, if we were to banish - with iust an aerosol blast or two - some of the most seifish and unacceptable behaviour in our society? Is it really so colourful and. cheerful to live in streets awash with wee

Greedy Americans and nice, wet Europeans – the politics of weather



NICHOLAS SCHOON THE KYOTO **SUMMIT**

How will the Kyoto Climate Summit, which starts on Monday, play in most of the British media and across Europe? Well, something like this. The greedy, selfish US, with its airconditioners and big cars and isolationist, right-wing politicians, refuses to stop guzzling fossil fuels and insists on remaining the world's biggest climate-polluter - out of shortterm self-interest. But the enlightened European Union holds out to the last minute, insisting that all the wealthy countries make a big cut in their greenhouse gas emissions. In the end there is some weak and disappointing compromise that does little to save the world from flood, drought and scaring heat.

It isn't an unreasonable portrayal. But once you start to peer into the murky big picture behind this summit, you may find the American position a little more understandable.

Considered on a time-scale of thousands of years, the Earth's climate fluctuates naturally, wildly - and dangerously. The last ice age ended but 10,000 years ago. The next one may be round the corner. Our Western world has been built in a few hundred years of mild, pretty stable climate. We ought to be grateful for this and leave it well alone; instead we have started interfering by raising the level of heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere.

Unfortunately, the best of our scientists can give us only vague ideas about how quickly those changes will proceed and what they will be. At least another 10 years will pass before they can tell, with any certainty, what climate change will mean for most nations over a 20-to-100-year time-scale.

That makes negotiations on how to tackle the problem immensely complicated. It can only be solved collectively, with countries finding some agreement on bow to share out the sacrifices that have to be made.



But how can a government agree to take action that may cost money and votes back at home, when it does not know what it stands to lose if there is no action?

Furthermore, climate change cannot be "stopped" in any normal sense of the word. It has already begun, and if we immediately did everything we could to fix it, such as stopping all consumption of fossil fuels overnight, it would still keep on changing deep into the next century - albeit more and more

In any case, calling such an immediate halt is out of the question, for our economies and standard of living are addicted to gas, oil and coal and can be only slowly weaned off them. As we burn our way through the vast quantities of remaining fossil fuel reserves way beyond the millennium, we are committing our Earth to centuries of further climate changes and increasing danger. This is an issue not just for the next century but for the deep future - we need to think about it not just in terms of children

same time-scale as those who built medieval cathedrals. For it is in this distant future, beyond 2100, when the ice caps of Antarctica and Greenland will slip into the sea and raise its level by hundreds of feet unless we start turning the supertanker now.

The goal of the Kyoto delegates should be to slow down the rate of change to a level that our most vulnerable systems farming, forestry, low-lying islands, water resources - can cope with, and eventually stabilise the climate.

We have only a dim idea of what is tolerable, and where the balance lies between the costs of acting now and the costs of climate damage - or coping with it - in future. But it seems certain that achieving this goal means making deep, global cuts in the next few decades in the emissions of climatechanging gases, principally carbon dioxide, which comes mainly from burning fossil fuels. Yet our consumption of these fuels is rising steadily, in line with population and econ-

and grandchildren, but on the omic growth, at around 2 per

We certainly can cut fossil

cent a year.

fuel consumption, especially in the developed world. After all, we use it extremely wastefully because it is so abundant and cheap, and there are alternatives. But making these changes is certain to be painful for governments - they will have to upset powerful industrial lobbies, raise the cost of fuel, risk the wrath of voters. They are being asked to take all this pain with no precise knowledge of what the gain is; what exactly

The information is unavailable. That is the main reason why these negotiations are so difficult and so stalled. The European Union's solution is to say that the developed nations must lead the way with a simple, decisive action - they must all cut their emissions by 15 per cent by 2010 compared to their 1990 level. That would make a real start on tackling the

is in it for individual nations.

threat, and it will also show the Third World - whose emissions are rising rapidly, and will soon overtake the West's - that the rich countries are serious. It is a bold, moral stance, but somewhat compromised by the fact that under this proposal some of the poorer EU countries will be allowed to raise their emissions drastically - by more than 30 per cent. Other, wealthier countries, such as Britain and Germany, will offset this by making even deeper cuts.

All the other developed countries are willing to give far less. Australia, whose economy is particularly reliant on heavy fossil fuel use, insists that it must be allowed to raise its fossil fuel emissions by 18 per cent. The US advocates stabilising annual emissions between 1990 and 2010. It also insists that big, fastindustrialising developing countries such as India and China will have to make some sort of commitment in Kyoto to restrain their fast rising emissions.

And here's another huge problem in these negotiations. The bad guys, us in the West who have caused the great bulk of climate change so far, hold nearly all the cards. It looks as though we will suffer the least as the climate changes, because our wealth and technology put us in a fairly strong position to cope with rising sea levels and changes in temperature and rainfall. Poor, densely populated nations will be far more at risk, yet they have little negotiating strength. As the climate summit opens, the Third World is divided and confused about the issue. If they refuse to discuss controlling their emissions, and there is no agreement and no controls, then they will be the biggest losers. It is extremely unfair.

We have had less than 10 vears of international negotiations over climate change, and a century or more of them lies ahead. This climate diplomacy will make the protracted superpower negotiations over nuclear weapons and the endless Gatt world trade talks look quick and easy in comparison. Kyoto is ginning. The most important thing of all is to make any agreement legally binding and enforceable - if there is no progress on that, the planet really is in trouble.

So the big picture peddled by the press is half right. America looks pretty ugly. But Europe's grand idea of a simple, moral gesture offers no lasting

Private education: how we can have our cake and eat it



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TREVOR PHILLIPS LABOUR'S **EGALITARIANISM**

Just for a moment there, I thought the middle classes were going to get away with it. The word going around the smart dinner parties was that Blair's men were realists. They would not interfere with the comforts that make up for the stresses of pursuing a professional career.

"inclusive" as all hell; but our private pleasures would be immune from invasion by rough sorts. Improve the national health service by all means; but privately-insured appendices would still be taken out in one of those nice Bupa facilities. Support the arts, but "access" would not mean yobs at the opera; and as for education well, a few extra billion go to state schools, but what we pay for keeps its character.

Labour's shadow ministers made the right noises before the election, and since May they have sturdily stood by the rights of the affluent - and sometimes not-so-affluent - to pay for those little extras which make life more comfortable.

It's the sort of message that makes the professional's heart sing as he picks up his Independent (or some other, nameless, broadsheet) in the village near his weekend cottage. It's also a message that causes Labour activists to do unBlairite things, such as giving Ken Livingstone's political career the kiss of life. The word "betrayal" still comes easily to the lips of the Labour rank-and-file. Covent Garden are faced with

New Labour tail - if they can hold their nerve (tobacco and foxes are not good omens). In recent days the Government has turned out two of its principal charm-merchants to tell Labour's traditional class enemies how safe they are; this is the equivalent of the football Of course, they could be as club chairman's vote of confidence in the manager. It is blindingly obvious that inside the velvet glove the steel fist is flexing itself.

Those who abandoned the Blue Team on 1 May, assuming that all the nasty redistributive nonsense had been knocked out of Labour by that nice Mr Blair, had better think again; socialism was never just about money. Today the vogue word is "inclusion"; it may not mean more taxes for the affluent, but if it means what I think it means, there are many who would happily part with some extra dosh rather than be in-

The first signs came from the arts. There was rejoicing when the poetry-reading, intellectual Friend of Tony, Chris Smith, got the Ministry of Culture gig: Mr Smith has lived up to his reputation as a man who knows his arts from his elbow, with positive announcements and appearances on screen, in print and in the theatre. But his determination to let ordinary folk enjoy the delights of grand opera is clearly making some uneasy. The management of

But there is a sting in the rumblings amongst backers, who wonder why they should pay large amounts of money to mix with hoi polloi. They want everyone to enjoy opera; but that's not the same as saying that "their" Covent Garden should be the People's Opera. Smith is right, of course, and they are wrong; but it is their money which allows the Opera House to do much of what it does. Will they enjoy rubbing shoulders with people who think of opera as football theme music? They are now face to face with the true meaning of "inclusion"; you can have what you like, but you may have to share some of it with people you don't like. In the next few months we will begin to see just how "new" some of Labour's rich new friends really

Even more sticky is the question of what to do about independent, fee-paying schools. Most of them are day schools; many of them used to be in the state sector. Relatively few are of the great historic boarding school stamp.

Let me declare an interest; my own children, by dint of hard work and talent, qualified for entry to one of the five most successful schools in the country. It used to be the grammar school in my area when I was a child; it is now independent, I knew, at the age of 11, that its pupils were different; when my school met them in Top of the Form, having given us a sound thrashing they gave

shouted "hooray". But they've changed. Now they too say "hooray"; they play sports against local schools; and this is probably the most genuinely multicultural school I've seen in this country (and I've filmed in dozens over the years). It would have been perverse to have turned down the chance for my own children to benefit from what the school has to offer, purely because money is involved. And in London we are not unusual; the crisis in our capital's schools is now so extreme that one-sixth of parents choose to pay for education even if they can scarcely afford it. All the independent schools are hugely oversubscribed. It's not surprising, when you are told that local state schools cannot guarantee uninterrupted schooling, that five GCSEs is regarded as an outstanding performance, and that the school can't afford set texts. Though there are no available statistics, the anecdotal evidence suggests that desire for what independent schools offer is strongest amongst those who regard themselves as most dis-

advantaged and excluded; the Getting rid of the independents won't solve the problems of the state schools. And there is little or no proof that an injection of middle-class energy to a state school will lift results for all; it is just as likely

us three "hurrahs", whilst we bully their way into soaking up a disproportionate share of publicly funded resources. But something clearly has to be done to avoid the growth of educational apartheid. That is why the speech by the Education Minister, Stephen Byers, to the conference of the Girls' Schools Association was so cunning. He was clear that killing the independent schools was off the agenda, thus comforting the people who pay; but he also made it clear with carrot and implied stick that they would have to share, or else the "leave-'em- alone" policy might have to be revised.

Suggestions that private hospital facilities will also have to play their part in meeting the beds crisis in the NHS reinforce the suspicion that the publicprivate partnership which ministers talk about involves more than handing public resources to private shareholders.

Here, perhaps, is one of the building blocks of Blair's "third way". Those with money may well be allowed to retain the privileges that money can buy; but where these involve using public goods - land, culture, information, there's no exclusive lease. We middle classes may not pay extra taxes, but we are going to have to find ways of sharing our good fortune with everyone else; we can have our cake, and we can eat it - but we've had a clear warning that there will be new diners that, as with most public ser- at the table and that we shall vices, the middle classes will have to provide for them.



She would start her first number sitting at a sinfully black grand piano. Arrayed all in black, with dead white face and hands, she attacked her first number, her left hand implacably hammering out the strange harmonies of the bass. Then a little-girl voice, barely audible, began to drift through the enigmatic lyric she had composed only for herself, and for her voice alone. For the second verse, accompanied by accordion, guitar or Didier, Lockwood's violin, she would rise from her lakeside of keys and it was like a wraith from Giselle lingering over her mystic tomb, Gothic, romantic.

Barbara possessed remarkable breath control, for her voice seemed to float on a minimum of the air required by mortal men, and her lips hardly moved. Unless one knew the test by heart, as all the fans did, it was often difficult to catch the words: one sometimes felt, as when listening to the relentless mutterings of Françoise Sagan, that one needed a decoder.

But Barbara had been trained at the Conservatoire de Paris, where she had won two prizes for classical singing, and she could also declaim her words with true dramatic force and vocal power, as at the end of certain songs, when she would throw up her left arm, contorting it like a boa constrictor, then flinging back her head to expose a defenceless throat above which a square jaw supported the tireless mask of her exhaustion.

Despite her excellent training, Barbara found it difficult to get work. Perhaps in that postwar period people were looking for someone to make them forget the dark past, not to remind them of sadness, loneliness, heartbreak and death. So she was practically unknown for 15

sels night-club before making obscure beginnings as "La Chanteuse de Minuit". She stayed there five years (1958-63). singing Brassens, Ferré, Brel, Ferrat, then the fin-de-siècle favourites whose sinister humour suited her style,

One of the composers of that period had been British, the colour. bilingual Harry Fragson, a great favourite of the café concert, who wrote some famous chansons including the immortal "Reviens". Barbara was also attracted to the ditties of Léon Xantof, who composed the equally immortal songs of Yvette Guibert, "Madame Arthur" and "Le Fiacre", as well as the more sentimental "Rêve de Valse", all neatly interpreted by Barbara, though Guibert had been a diseuse rather than a chanteuse.

her own hand at composition. and in 1963 gave a recital that revealed her to a much wider public, singing "Dis, quand viendras-tu?", "Chapeau bas" and "Le Temps du Lilas". She made her first appearances at the old Bobino and at that great shrine of the chanson (recently reopened after tactful refurbishing), the Olympia. She produced one of her most truly popular songs, "Ma plus belle histoire d'amour, c'est vous" which she would address at the end of every concert to a delirious audience, enraptured by the parting thought that they and only they were the ones she really loved. She was irresistible, and President François Mitterrand himself adopted her as his favourite singer: he would invite her to the Elysée dinners to sing for his guests and arranged for her to receive the grand reward of Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur.

Mitterrand was a moderate socialist, but Barbara had more extreme left-wing tendencies, which endeared her to the French Communist leader Georges Marchais and the Communist newspaper L'Humanité. Barbara often made approaching one million. years; working in a murky Bros- appearances with Colette

Magny, Jean Ferrat and other left-wing entertainers, and she supported campaigns for victims of Aids, of child slavery, racism, sexism, harsh immigration laws. The titles of her songs became more and more ominous, and often included the colour black which she called "a festival of

Dedicated fans discussed her tall, emaciated figure and well-cut robes, saying "Black suits her so well." She became known as "La Dame en Noir" and sang sombre chansons like "La Dame brune", "Le Mal de vivre", "Les Amours incesnueuses". Two of her songs, "La Louve" ("The She-Wolf") and "L'Aigle Noir" ("The Black Eagle"), fitted her own appearance on stage.

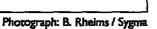
Photographed full face she often looked ambisexual, but in Barbara had begun trying profile she became, with her hawk-like nose and bold jawline, heavily made-up eyes glittering in that chalk-white mask, like a black eagle or a prowling beast of prey. Her love affairs were unhappy ("Mes Hommes") and the passions of a femme fatale in despair were reflected in many dark hymns like "Le Soleil noir" ("Black Sun") inspired by Gérard de Nerval's sonnet "El Desdichado" ("The III-Fated"): My one star is dead - and my lute's constellations

Bear the black sun of Melancholia

> She slowly dropped out of sight, with only occasional returns to the stage - I saw her in 1987 at the Châtelet, her last full public appearance in Paris, all in black, the entire audience in tears after being cheered up a little by her "Petit Bois de Saint-Amant", based on a classic Bach theme and interspersed by perky little quotes from a nursery rhyme. She was most heartbreaking when she tried to smile and be gay.

"La Grande Dame de la Chanson" has bequeathed to us a treasury of records and alburns. Sales of her last album. Barbara, recorded in 1996 between bouts of asthma, are

- James Kirkup 'La Dame en Noir': Barbara in 1987



Frank Mulville

Frank Nugent Blood Mulville, writer and yachtsman: born Dinard, France | January 1924; married first Mary Watson (one daughter; marriage dissolved), secondly Celia Foster (two sons; marriage dissolved), thirdly Wendy Stack; died Maldon, Essex 3 November 1997.

Frank Mulville will be remembered as one of Britain's finest sea writers. His nine books are largely accounts of his own life and travels on salt water. His observations and fearless selfanalysis raise them to the level of literature.

He was the youngest of seven children. His parents had met in Argentina but his early upbringing was in London, in Kensington. Family holidays in Brightlingsea introduced him to the smacks and barges that proliferated along the Essex shores in those days. He eked out his childhood winters improving his understanding of sailing theory with models on the Round Pond in Kensington Gardens, and respect for traditional rigs and hull forms stayed with him all his life.

Times were hard for the Mulvilles during the Depression and in due course Frank found himself on a ship back to Agrentina with his father. His book North Star to Southern Cross (1993), winner of the "Best Book of the Sea" award, recounts the agonies suffered by a susceptible foreign youth in a Spanish-speaking boarding school, contrasting them with periods of freedom on the pampas among the gauchos.

At the commencement of the Second World War, Mulville was back in London at St Paul's School, which he promptly left to apprentice himself to the Blue Star Line. In 1943, his ship was torpedoed and he organised a sailing rig for a lifeboat he shared with 45 survivors. Later in the war, he acquired Ratty, a sailing dinghy which he used as a tender for the tug aboard which he now served as an RNVR lieutenant.

He married for the first time soon after the war, but employment was hard to find. He tried window cleaning, journalism, selling pressure cookers. and founded a secretarial service which turned into a printing firm and is still in business. Two yachts followed, with voyages to Spain and Holland, but it was aboard his third boat, Girl Stella, a converted Looe fishing smack, that he made his name as a sailor. A lifelong socialist and a

shield Dia

member of the Labour Party, Mulville determined to discover the truth about early postrevolution Cuba for himself. He sailed across the Atlantic with his second wife, Celia, and their two sons, Patrick and Adrian. The writing that came out of this experience and a subsequent single-handed voyage to Cuba with his final boat Iskra (In Grandma's Wake, 1970, and Dear Dolphin, 1991) ranks among the most thought-provoking work of its kind. His description of life in a cane-cutting brigade, toiling with his comrades until they dropped in the dust and heat "for the Revolution" is particularly powerful. Girl Stella was lost in a traumatic shipwreck in the Azores.

It was at one of the lowest ebbs in the life of this creative man that he found the 30ft Iskra. a traditional wooden cutter built in 1930. Her workaday good looks appealed to this nononsense seaman and his easy relationship with her lasted for the remainder of his life. In her, 👍 he and Wendy, his third wife, sailed the Atlantic from the Arctic Circle to Buenos Aires. The stories of their many voyages run through his later books.

It is interesting to speculate how a man of Frank Mulville's curtailed formal education contrived to write with such sensitivity and technical skill. He himself had no doubts:

Just as the ocean wears away the rocks and bends the contour of the shore to its will, so it washes over a man's mind, smoothing the sharp edges, knocking off the conceits, flattening the prejudices so that he is left which to govern his life.

- Tom Cunliffe

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The Right Rev Hugh Gough

Hugh Rowlands Gough, priest: born 19 September 1905: ordained deacon 1928. priest 1929; OBE 1945; Vicar of Islington 1946-48; Prebendary, St Paul's Cathedral 1948: Archdeacon of West Ham 1948-58-Suffragan Bishop of Barking 1948-59; Archbishop of Sydney (Metropolitan of New South Wales) 1958-66; Primate of Australia 1959-66; Chaplain and Sub-Prelate, Order of St John of Jerusalem 1959-72: CMG 1965; Rector of Freshford 1967-72: Vicar of Limpley Stoke 1970-72; married 1929 The Hon Madeline Kinnaird (one daughter); died Over Wallop. Hampshire 13 November 1997.

op to come direct from England to a Metropolitan See in Australia. He was appointed Archchurch he had come to serve.

citement. He and his wife more remote and less accessible arrived in Sydney in May 1959 and soon began to make their were concerned; it took them by bishop Mowll but they liked his of conversation.

Gough had no previous ex-

perience of church government Hugh Gough was the last bishthrough an annual synod and its standing committees and he never really adjusted to this debishop of Sydney in 1958 and mocratic system. He moved his left an enduring mark on the office from Church House to Bishopscourt, where he carried Gough never ceased to be out routine administration and 'pukka" English, but he fell in correspondence with the help of love with Australia as a coun- a domestic chaplain and personal try still rich in adventure and ex- assistant. But this made him

direct manner and clipped style was to appoint a commission to examine the structures and finances of the diocese.

for the ordinary clergyman. He held a regular meeting of mark. His style of leadership his bishops and archdeacons; was quite new where clergy this kept him informed about diocesan needs and problems. storm. They never came to He delegated responsibility and know him, or he them, as inti- willingly trusted colleagues to mately as his predecessor, Arch- carry on at their own discretion his most constructive decision

Gough was too outspoken to escape media criticism. He was always prone to act first, and then reflect later. The Sydney Morning Herald and the Daily Telegraph treated him with dignity and respect, but he was subjected to a long and hostile campaign in the pages of the Anglican and in some secular publications such as Nation.

Hugh Gough came from a strong Evangelical background. He was born in 1905 in the then undivided continent of India. where his father was a Church Missionary Society (CMS) missionary on the North-West Frontier. School at Weymouth in Dorset led on to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he became President of the Cambridge Inter-collegiate Christ-

in 1927. After 12 months at the London College of Divinity, he was made deacon in 1928 and ordained to the priesthood in 1929. A curacy in Islington was followed by parish appointments at Bath, Bayswater and Carlisle. He served with distinction as an Army Chaplain and then, in 1946, became vicar of St Mary's, Islington, until 1948, when he was consecrated as Bishop of Barking in the

diocese of Chelmsford. He had been the first Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship, was closely associated with the Evangelical Alliance, often spoke at the Keswick Convention and was one of those who issued the invitation to Billy Graham for the that year. As Primate be travian Union and took his degree Harringay Crusade of 1954. elled widely in Australia, at-

No other bishop would identify himself with Billy Graham or support the Crusade until Archbishop Fisher took his seat on the platform for the final meeting. But Gough had taken his stand without regard of the cost in official favour, he was the rising hope of all evangelicals in the Fifties but his election as Archbishop of Sydney took him away from England.

He was elected to the Primacy of Australia by the Diocesan Bishops in October 1959 and he filled this role in a way that won well-deserved respect. The new Constitution for the Church in Australia came into effect on 1 January 1962 and it fell to Gough to preside over the first General Synod in May

tended the World Council of Churches General Assembly at New Delhi in 1961, and took part in the Anglican Congress at Toronto in 1963. He carried out visits to CMS in Pakistan in 1964 and to the Australian Armed Forces in Malaya and Vietnam in 1965.

But the nervous strain of seven strenuous years took their toll in a serious breakdown in health early in 1966 and he resigned from the See, just seven years after his enthronement. For a short time, he was vicar of the little parish of Freshford in the diocese of Bath and Wells: then he retired altogether and made his home first in Bath and then in the Hampshire village of Over Wallop.

Those who knew him well will never forget the warmth of



Gough: evangelical

his friendship or his courage in adversity. He had a high and adventurous spirit, coupled with a very humble loyalty and devotion. He kept in touch with Sydney affairs, welcomed many Sydney visitors in his home and followed church life in Sydney with unfailing interest.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memo-rial services, Wedding anniversaries, in Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, I Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London Eld 5DL, telephoned to 077-293 2081 (24-hour answaring machine 077-293 2010) or faxed to 077-293 2010, and are charged at 66.30 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (notices, functions, Forthcoming marriages, Harriages) must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £00 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number. to the Gazette Editor. The Indep

Appointments

Mr Dick jenidns, to be ambassador to the Republic of Georgia. Mr Michael Dibbin, to be High missioner to the Republic of Fiji Mr Christopher Peter Tootal, to be Chairman of the Copyright Tribunal. Mr Stephen Price Richards, to be a Justice of the High Court assigned to the Queen's Bench Division. Mr Nicholas Richard Pumfrey QC, to be a Justice of the High Court assigned to the Chancery Division.

Mr Hugh Bernard Harwood

Carlisle QC, to be part-time President of the Transport Tribunal.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS TODAY: Princess Hargaree, President, the Guide Association, attends the North East England Guide Association, attends the North East England Guide Association advent Service is York Minster, TOMORROW: The Duchess of Georgester, Patron, Scottish Opera, associate Gala Concent, at the Palace of Holymondhouse.

Changing of the Guard
TODAY. The Household Creaky Mounted Regunent mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse
Guards, I last, Nijmegen Company Greatalfer
Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Backingturn Patroc. I Silm. band provided by the SoutGuards. TOPSORROW! The Household CreatGuards. TOPSORROW! The Content's Life.

Birthdays TODAY: Professor Sir Ivor Batche-

lor, psychiatrist, \$1; M Jacques Chirac, President of France, 65; Sir Derek Day, former High Commissioner in Canada, 70; Professor Sir Michael Howard, historian, 75; Mr Derek Jameson, radio presenter and former editor, 68; Professor Frank Kermode, literary critic, 78; Mr John Mayall, rhythm and blues musician, 64; Mr Geoffrey Moorhouse, writer, 66; Sir Alan Moses, High Court judge, 52; Lady Porter, former Lord Mayor of Westminster. 67; Professor David Rhind, Director-General and Chief Executive, Ordnance Survey, 54; Mr David Rintoul, actor, 48; Mr David Rogers, chief executive, Amstrad, 51; Dame Janet Smith QC, High Court judge, 57; Sir David Steel, former chairman, the Wellcome Trust, 81; Sir Dennis Weatherstone, former chairman and chief executive, LP Morgan & Co, New York, 67; Mr Alan Lee Williams, director, Arlantic Council, 67; Miss Louise Winter, operatic mezzo-soprano, 38.

TOMORROW: Mrs Hilary Armstrong MP, Minister for Local Gov-ernment and Housing, 52; Miss Diana Cotton QC, a Recorder of the Crown Court, 56; Mr Richard Crenna, film actor, 71; Mr George Duffield, jockey, 51; Mr Roger Glover, rock musician, 52; Sir Victor Goodhew, former MP and government minister, 78; Mr George Graham, football manager, 53; Mr Andy Gray, footballer, 42; Mr Robert Guillaume, singer and actor, 67; Mr Frank Ifield, singer, 61; Mr Louis Kirby, Editor, UK Mail, 69; Mr Gary Lineker, footballer, 37; Mr Radu Lupu, planist, 52; Mr Patrick McLoughlin MP, 40; Miss Virginia Mayo, actress, 77; Lord Parry, for-

mer chairman of the Welsh Tourist

Board, 72; Miss Marguerite Porter, ballerina, 49; Sir Stanley Roes, for-

mer High Court judge. 90; Mr Max

Reinhardt, publisher, 82; Mr John Hamilton Scott. Lord-Lieutenant of Shetland, 61; Mr Stan Sulzmann, sasophonist, 49: Lord Tope, former Liberal MP, 54; Mr Efrem Zimbalist Jnr, television and film actor, 74.

Anniversaries

TODAY: Births: John Harvard, founder of the University, baptised 1607; Gertrude Jekyll, landscape archirect, 1843; Carlo Levi, novelist, painter and journalist, 1902. Deaths: Giovanni Bellini (Giambellini), painter, 1516; Thomas Wolsey, Car-dinal and Lord Chancellor, 1530; Hans Holbein the Younger, painter, 1543; Giacomo Antonio Domenico Michele Secondo Maria Puccini composer, 1924. On this day: the Eighth Army opened its offer 1943. Today is the Feast Day of St Brendan of Birr, St Radbod, St Saturninus or Sernin of Toulouse and St Saturnious, martyr.

TOMORROW: Births: Andrea Palladio, (Andrea di Pietro della Gondola) architect, 1508; Sir Philip Sidney, poet, soldier and countier, 1554; John Bunyan, writer, baptised, 1628; Jonathan Swift, author, 1667. Deathse Oscar Fingal O'Fla-hertie Wills Wilde, playwright, 1900; loyce Irene Grenfell, entertainer, 1979. On this day: the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, near London, was destroyed by fire, 1936. Today is the Feast Day of St Andrew the Apostle, St Cuthbert Mayne and St

Lectures

TOMORRÓW Tate Gallery: Laurence Bradbury Symbolism in England (3): G.F. Watts", 2.30pm. National Portrait Gallery: J.K.D. Nicholas Hawksmoor". 3pm.

FAITH & REASON

A cry in the dark from Muslim youth

Unnoticed by the media, an intifada has already begun on the streets of Britain, says Fund Nahdi, editor of the Muslim newspaper Q-News. To prevent its growth society must find a way of listening to the voice of young British Islam.

The launching of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) last week was an initiative forged by a community that, despite the odds, is showing signs of both growth and maturity. In one sense last Sunday's gathering was celebratory nothing more than an assembly of the converted. But the powerful call it made for "Muslim unity" may prove of real significance.

The atmosphere at the MCB inaugural convention was part therapy, part euphoria. It was an opportunity for the mostly middle-aged men who are mosque- and institution-oriented to meet and hug each other again - part of an elaborate ritual of self-congratulation and self-assurance. But, within a community consisting of more than 56 nationalities, questions are always going to be asked about any group

"umbrella body" or "a representative" organisation.

The idea of setting up a representative body for British Muslims has been tried before. In the mid-Seventics Dr Syed Pasha formed the Union of Muslim Organisations (UMO), a body largely of first-generation professionals interested in formulating links with the British government rather than in representing grass-roots Muslims in Britain. In the Nineties the late Dr Kalim Siddiqui set up the Muslim Parliament, which despite its name was not an elected body and which consisted mostly of first-generation activists. The MCB has therefore set out to work as in independent body beholden to no one outside Britain, and its broad-based approach and emphasis on the promotion of Muslim "co-operation, consensus and unity" should make it more appealing to the second generation of British Muslims than its rivals.

Certainly there is a pressing need. felt by both Muslims and a substantial body of non-Muslims in the country, to give British Muslims an articulate, moderate and relevant voice. This need is perhaps best pondered in the light of what might happen if British Muslims continue to cry in the dark.

Recent reports, including one by the which sets itself up as either an Policy Studies Institute, have provided

ample evidence of the deprivation and causes in the Muslim world. Idle hands disenfranchisement faced by the Muslim community. Muslims, both men and women, face more prejudice and discrimination than any other community when it comes to employment and the provision of housing and health care services. Perhaps the most blatant of all institutional anti-Muslim discrimination in modern Britain is the denial of state

funding for Muslim schools. Islamophobia. as Professor Gordon Conway, chair of the Runnymede Trust report on the subject recently said, is a "real and growing phenomenon an ugly word for an ugly reality". The pervasive hatred of Islam and Muslims across all sections of British society is a serious matter that needs to be tackled with urgency and solid commitment. Yet the Muslim community, caught in a vicious web of poverty and systemic disadvantage, is bewildered and in no position to deal with the multiple socioeconomic disadvantages affecting it.

Responsible imams, community leaders and activists cannot stop the tide of young people turning to criminality and extremism. Platoons of young angry Muslims are mushrooming all over the country. Twisted and disfigured by the twin evils of racism and Islamophobia. they are bitter and resentful - potential

and heads are also vulnerable to simplistic and demagogic slogans.

Though the media may not yet have noted the fact, the intifada in the inner cities of Britain has already begun: last summer young Muslim people were involved in at least 14 violent incidents with the authorities. "Shaping the future of Islam in Britain," Khalida Khan, a keynote speaker, told the MCB gathering, "depends very much on shaping individuals to become Muslims, in their faith and spirituality, ethics and morality, deeds, community life and most important of all, in their identity,"

The building of a British Islam will have to be founded upon a new realisation - that in the UK Muslims cannot operate as if they are a majority; they have to rediscover a theology and Islamic jurisprudence suited to a minority living in a multi-faith and multicultural society. But they also need the help of the rest of society in combating Islamophobia, particularly at the point where it prevents Muslims and non-Muslims cooperating on the joint diagnosis and solution of major shared problems relating to urban poverty and deprivation. The alternative may be too frightening to contemplate.

fifth-column guerrillas for the numerous . Faith & Reason' is edited by Paul Vallety

Shield Diagnostics shares rise as rumours link it with Abbott

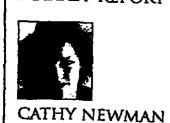
rate activity in continental

month, and now a bid battle

er, despite Capel's bearish

A minority of insurance

MARKET REPORT



tics, the biotechnology company developing Activated heart disease. Lawyers are believed to

be finalising a deal for the commercialisation of the test, erstwhile managing director shed 16.75p to 285p. its results next month. Market sources are betting that the partner for the deal will be Abbott Laboratories, the Chica- his unexpected resignation. A Europe. BAT Industries' figo-based group, with which partnership with Abbott would nancial services arm merged Shield has been involved in the revive the stock, but, as diagpast. There is a rumour that nostics experts point out, it Abbott may take a stake in Shield as part of the venture. the test could be sold into the titillating the sector. Howev-Shield's shares shot up 12.5p market in a big way.

to 697.5p. The diagnostic test will,

one having a stroke.

It would not be a surprise Factor Twelve (AFT), a test for to see Shield teaming up with market. Gordon Hall, Shield's dropped 20p to 638p and GRE which Shield may announce at who has stayed on as an adviser, used to work at Abbott.

Shield's shares plummeted been given a boost by corpo- of England, Eddic George, last month after he announced would be at least a year before for the French group, AGF, is

The insurance sector is bestance, other analysts say the ginning to overboil. The likes UK stocks look undervalued. Shield hopes, provide an al- of Commercial Union have ternative to cholesterol testing been having a field day during stocks did manage to buck yesas a means of detecting sus- the past week, but the situation terday's downward trend. The

Dealers were yesterday taking test could eventually be used one of the least-wanted blue and preferred bid target Lonthe pulse of Shield Diagnosto measure the risk of somethis, down 37p to 815p, after don & Manchester Group

Smiths Industries eased 24p ker, Dresdner Kleinwort Bendon & Manchester Group climbed &p to 509p. HSBC James Capel said it was looking pricey if a bid Fears of an interest rate rise

failed to materialise. It dragged in advance of next week's Abbott, which has around 40 other former favourites in its Monetary Policy Committee per cent of the diagnostics wake, Prudential Corporation meeting drove the pound higher and caused grief for exporters. Comments to the During the past week in particular, UK insurers have Treasury Select Committee by the Governor of the Bank

> Share Spotlight share price, pence Shield Diagnostics

Footsie was in the dol-

to 774p, and GKN shed 14p to son, reportedly upged its losses forecast for the lear to worries also saw retailers left January 1998. Ann Ive son, on the shelf. Dixons closed who was ousted as chief exception of the shelf. Dixons closed who was ousted as chief exception of the shelf. Dixons closed who was ousted as chief exception of the shelf. Dixons closed who was ousted as chief exception. 21.5p poorer at 673.5p and Great Universal Stores tumbled 15p to 695p ahead of re- America. But that strategy sults next week. Talk of a Nat was overturned after she was West downgrade of the sector also did not help matters.

been expanding into North

replaced by David Hoare, for-

eroded as PC prices were

22.5p down at 50p.

merly chief operating officer.

Viglen Technology, the

drums all day yesterday, and computer group which was refused to be revived by Wall
Street. It closed at a low for the
was another third line casualty. Street. It closed at a low for the day of 4831.8, down 57.2 The company warned at its anpoints, and it didn't once man- nual general meeting that age to cross the 4990 barrier. margins would continue to be

Mining lost its mettle, with Billiton down 2.5p to 146p, forced down. It shares closed and Rio Tinto dropping 19p to 715p. Weak metal prices were blamed for the decline.

TAKING STOCK

Christopher Moore, chief executive of Torex Group, the computer software and services company, yesterday made almost £209,000 by selling 300,000 shares at 72.5p each.

He said the money would be used to pay a personal tax bill. Mr Moore now controls 7.91 per cent of the отрану.

Cameo Corporation got off to a coaring start in trading on Cax.

The company, which is involved in commercial and industrial activities in Central Asia, leapt 34.5p to 104.5p.

Camco operates in particular in Kyrgyzstan, formerly part of the USSR. It has permits for joint

Intelek, the electronics ventures with groups based manufacturer, saw its shares in Kyrgyzstan to produce

as a mo	eans of detecting sus- lity to heart attacks.	the past week, but the situation seemed to have taken a turn for the worse yesterday. CU was	stocks did manage to buck yes- terday's downward trend. The Independent Insurance Group improved by 37.5p to £10.90,	Disgnostics Diagnostics Dispnostics	blamed for the decline. Laura Ashley found itself out of fashion too. It dropped to an all-time low, easing 4p	manufacturer, saw its shares jump 3.75p to 15.75p after an upbeat statement on its order book.	ventures with groups based in Kyrgyzstan to produce and distribute low technology goods.
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Samsung, the biggest industrial conglomerate in South Korea, has postponed building the next phase of its £450m electronics investment in North-east England as Korean corporations scramble to pull back from overseas expansion in the face of a crippling financial crisis. Richard Lloyd Parry in Seoul and Chris Godsmark in London report on Samsung's decision, which could cost some 2,000 jobs and further undermine confidence in the ability of Korean firms to deliver on their investment plans.

Senior Samsung executives in Korea yesterday said the British government was told more than five months ago that further investment at Wynyard Park, between Stockton and Hartlepool, was not viable. The group blamed the weakening business climate, as well as the declining credit of Korean companies with international lenders.

The project is the second phase of a twopart investment which was greeted as a "wonderful opportunity" by Michael Heseltine, then president of the Board of Trade, when it was annouced in October 1994. Mr Heseltine said the project was "as significant as the early wave of large-scale Japanese investments" in the UK.

Samsung Europe said £130m had been spent on a training centre and on factories producing microwave ovens and colour monitors, which between them employ 900 people. The Korean giant also has a factory at nearby Billingham making television sets. But the centrepiece of the scheme, a plant making semiconductors, personal computers and fax machines and employing 2,000, has been postponed indefinitely. Samsung executives in Korea said the additional investment would have been \$1.4bn (£875m), though a spokesman for the company's European operations insisted the whole site was estimated to cost £450m.

The group said the collapse in the value of the Korean won and a world-wide loss of trust in the creditworthiness of the country's firms after a wave of bankruptcies made it difficult to raise the money needed for the investment. Samsung has also been hit by a plunge in computer chip prices in a market plagued by worldwide overproduction.

When we first proposed this, things looked very rosy," said Moon Dong Shik, Samsung's executive of globalisation. "All of a sudden came this oversupply. We could build the factory, but that would be a crazy decision. It would be very dishonest and we would deceive a lot of people by saying that we were going to invest that."

In theory, plans for the plant could be revived if the Korean economy improves and semiconductor prices go up. "If we made an investment of semiconductors in Europe it would always be in the UK," said Mr Moon. "But we don't have a very optimistic prospect for the next two or three years."

The Department of Trade and Industry last night confirmed it had been given advance warning of Samsung's deliberations. A spokesman said the DTI had been "kept informed that Samsung were reviewing their North-east project". But the spokesman said: "We have not received today's announcements from Samsung."

The spokesman said the DTI had not revealed the threat to the investment before now because to do so would have been "commercially confidential". Peter Man-

Bardays, the UK bank, is to close down its

Japanese equities business after failing to find

a suitable buyer, with the loss of around 100

jobs in Tokyo. Some staff covering Japanese

sales desks in other Barclays' offices will also

Martin Taylor, Barclays' chief executive, put large chunks of BZW, Barclays' investment

banking arm, up for sale last month after the

businesses failed to generate adequate returns.

Mr Taylor originally intended to sell the busi-

nesses as a package, but was forced to adopt

a piecemeal approach as potential purchasers

dropped one by one out of the bidding race.

bought the equities and corporate finance di-

visions earlier this month at a knockdown price.

But the Swiss bank turned up its nose up Bar-

clays' Asian and Australasian activities. The

Japanese operation was dubbed "a loser" in

a confidential video-conference for CSFB di-

A spokesperson for Bardays said: "We have

talked to number of potential purchasers [for

the Japanese equities business] but were not

able to come to a mutually satisfactory agree-

CSFB, eventually left as the sole bidder.

lose their jobs.

BZW quits Japanese

equities business

delson, the local MP and Minister Without Portfolio, was traveling abroad yesterday and could not be contacted for comment.

The news was greeted with surprise on Teesside, where the second phase of the investment was seen as the key to bringing in further Korean components makers. Aiready three other Korean firms have set up as suppliers to Samsung nearby.

Dave Wood from the Tees Valley Development Company, a council-backed organisation promoting inward savestment, said: "I suppose it doesn't come as a total shock, given the drop in the world-wide semiconductor market. But it is surprising that they told the Government and the news did not get to us."

The scale of Government grants for the project has never been disclosed, though the aid package was structured in phases as the different stages of the investment were completed. Local authorities were offering a further £5m of grants to Samsung, provided the group gave permanent jobs to unemployed workers.

Mr Wood said the creation of a further 2,000 jobs was central to the drive to reduce unemployment in the Tees Valley. which stands at more than 9 per cent and almost double the national average.

Samsung's decision is even more surprising given that three days ago Chegill Shin, chief executive of Samsung Europe, issued a statement saying the conglomerate remained "fully committed" to all its overseas operations, including Wynyard Park. Two months ago Samsung further demonstrated its commitment by announcing another £5m investment at Wynyard Park to extend microwave production capacity. It has boosted production from an expected 740,000 this year to more than 1 million ovens in 1998.

One council official on Teesside said confusion surrounded the future of the project. "Our biggest problem is getting information out of Samsung. Relations are cordial, but they are peculiarly secretive. It's almost impossible to get anything out of them about their plans."

The comments follow Samsung's announcement last week of an unprecedentper cent cut in investment, reductions in executive pay, the merging of departments and the sale or closure of unprofitable businesses.

"It's a matter of survival," said Hwang Young Key, senior managing director and chief of staff in Samsung's finance group yesterday. "The problem with corporate Korea overall is high growth based on high leverage. This formula worked successfully in the Sixties, Seventies and Eighties, but in the Nineties we should have realised earlier that it will not be able to deliver success in the 21st century."

Yesterday a spokesman for another conglomerate, Daewoo, said operations at the company's VCR factory in Antrim, Northem Ireland, would be reviewed as part of a world-wide assessment of company operations. Hyundai was also reported this week to have delayed investment in a £3bn semiconductor plant in Dunfermline, Scotland. Of the four big Korean conglomerates, only LG, which has a £4.5bn project in South Wales, insists that its investments in Britain will not be affected.

Diplomats in Seoul are waiting nervously for the outcome of negotiations between the South Korean government and the IMF over the terms of the bail-out. On Thursday, the Korean finance minister, Lim Chang Yuel, acknowledged that the \$20bn which Seoul initially requested would not be enough to cover short-term debts.

way the Japanese equities business has fared."

ness, Barclays will be left with around 450 staff

in Japan, 300 in Barclays Capital and 150 in

Barclays Global Investors, its asset manage-

Another 18 staff in other offices, includ-

ing London, have also lost their jobs. A Bar-

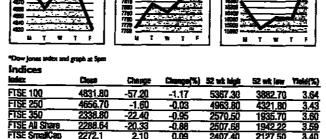
rate with their contracts".

Pollowing the closure of the equities busi-

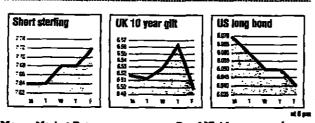
ed restructuring programme, involving a 30 Indiana Jane: Lara Croft, star of Tomb Raider II, may have to dig Eidos out of financial trouble

Has Lara Croft at last passed her sell-by date?

Eidos, the computer software group, is relying on the success of the long-awaited sequel to its bestselling game, Tomb Raider, to dig itself out of financial trouble after announcing a £18.3m loss yesterday for the six months to September. Tomb Raider II, starring the wild child fictional character Lara Croft, was released in the UK yesterday, following its launch in the US last week. It aiready appears to be beating sales expectations. HMV and the Electronics Boutique in London opened their doors at midnight on Thursday to meet demand for the product: "This is going to be the Christmas number one. We've already sold 200 this morning. The queues for this are unbelievable," said Michael Young, an assistant at Oxford Street's Electronics Boutique. Eidos' shares fell 25p to 655p yesterday after "extremely disappointing" sales of two other computer games and a rise in losses from £12.5m last half. However, the group said it had orders for 1.5 million Tomb Raider II units world-wide. Analysts were yesterday expecting Tomb II sales in the first year to beat the original Tomb Raider's 2.5 million units and predicted the group would make £9m profit in the full year. Asked if Lara, like the Spice Girls, might be nearing her sell-by date, Charles Cornwall, Eidos's chief executive replied stiffly: "Lara can't be talked about in the same sentence as the Spice Girls. She's a a hip Indiana Jane." Meanwhile, Hornby, a rather more traditional toy company, is struggling to steam into the modern age. The maker of model raitways and Scalextric racing cars said yesterday the strong pound had put the brakes on half-year profits, which fell from £1.1m to £973,000, but concentrating on the two core products would reap future benefits. Peter Newey, chairman, said it was too early to say how Christmas trading was going. - Sameena Ahmad and John Willcock



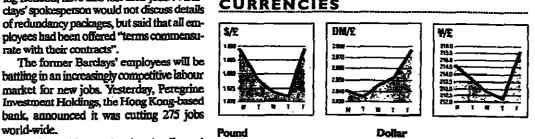
INTEREST RATES



MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Price (g)	Chig (p)	% (Age	Falls	Price (s)	Chg (p)	% Chor
Caledonia invest	690.00	34.00	5.18	Smithidine Beech	550.00	-50.00	-8.33
BG PLC	284.00	12.50	4.60	Schroders PLC	1706.00-	154.00	-8.28
Longtho PLC	91.00	3.50	4,00	Glaxo Wellcome	1300	-78	-5.66
Woolwich PLC	302.50	11,50	3.95	Guardian Royal	285	-16.75	-5.55

CURRENCIES



18.72 0.16 22.51 GDP 113.90 3.80 109.7

298.85 0.40 371.65 RPI 159.50 3.7 153.81

ride.	Pound				Dollar			
lays said yesterday that the disposal		at Spm.	Charge	Yr Aga		nt Spe	Change	Yr As
maining Asian equities businesses as	Dollar	1.6892	+1.68c	1.6820	Sterling	0.5920	-0.59p	0.594
the wholesale disposal of its Aus-	D-Mark	2,9791	+2.660	2.5757	D-Mark	1.7645	-0.12pf	1.532
activities were unaffected by yes-	Yen	215.59	+\3.29	191.66	Yen	127.60	+40.66	113.6
news. Analysts have expressed	£ Index	105.00	+0.90	94,00	S Index	107.30	+0.10	97.3
that Bardays will be able to sell its	OTH	ER	INDI	CAT	ORS			

Asian equities businesses as a r pointing to concerns about the profitability

The spokesperson denied that the decision was connected with recent turmoil in Far Eastern markets, saying: "We are happy with the

Investment Holdings, the Hong Kong-based bank, announced it was cutting 275 jobs of its rem

of some of the operations. The City is more upheat, however, about prospects for the bank's Australasian businesses.

- Lea Paterson

Consumers benefit as computer hardware prices plummet

The cost of kitting yourself out with a powerful, multimedia computer is dropping almost as fast as Asian stock prices these

A year ago £1,000 would have bought a machine with half the working memory, half the hard disk size and something three times as slow as that cash would buy today. Prices of pentium II MMX computers - the type of hi-tech machine that takes 3-D graphics and high-quality sound. in its stride - have dropped by 50 per cent in the last year.

A four-speed CD-Rom cost £100 in the summer. Today shoppers can pick up one that is six times as fast for half the price. And the best is yet to come for comAccording to Phil Burnham of Romtec, which monitors trends and prices in the UK PC market, Intel the giant US computer chip company is planning to slash the price of Pentium II processors next January and again in April. For consumers, the precipitous decline in prices - the result of retailers winding down stocks in readiness for the latest technology and continuing overcapacity in the market for computer components and semiconductors - is obviously welcome news.

For those companies supplying components and selling computers, it means thinning margins and falling profits. Viglen, demerged from Amstrad, is the latest casualty. Just a month after announcing puter buffs prepared to hang on. disappointing full-year figures, the

company warned yesterday that oversupply of computer components was forcing it to cut prices. hitting margins, though sales volumes were still rising. Shares in the company crashed almost onethird from 50p to 22.5p. The problem is industry-wide. The UK computer group RM

and the US group Gateway have all announced pricing pressures in the last few weeks. David Moore, marketing manager at Dell Computers, the number two direct-toconsumer supplier of computers in the UK agrees: "Everyone is competing on price. The market is incredibly aggressive. The only way for companies to win is keep costs low and sell high-quality products where prices are holding up."

Mutuals turn up the heat on would-be carpetbaggers

Building societies yesterday called for stronger defences against carpetbaggers as they faced further attempts to force them convert to banks and distribute billions of pounds of reserves to members. As Andrew Verity reports, the societies fear continual carpetbagging will damage their business unless the rules are toughened.

The Building Societies Association (BSA) said renewed attempts by Michael Hardern, self-styled carpetbagger-in-chief, to be nominated to run in boardroom elections at three mutual building societies, posed the threat of continual disruption to their business for years to come.

The former royal butler this week announced he is seeking to run for election at Bradford & Bingley, Britannia and Chelsea building societies. Mr Hardern, who in July was overwhelmingly defeated in elections to the board of Nationwide, needs only 50 members economic secretary to the Treasury, to sign his nomination in order to run for a boardroom post.

Building societies believe there is little likelihood of Mr Hardern and his pressure group, Members for Conversion, getting elected. But they fear that the tiny number of signatures required makes it too easy for carpetbaggers to disrupt their business. Adrian Coles, director general

of the BSA, yesterday said: "There is no way of stopping Mr Hardern. who came bottom of the poll in the Nationwide elections, from getting publicity and trying to get 50 signatures. It seems a ludicrously small number for a building society with millions of members."

He added: "It is actually going to be difficult to run a mutual society if every year you have fundamental problems like this. Elections could happen in 1998, 1999 and 2000. You couldn't run the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly on the basis of a referendum every year."

In the run-up to the Nationwide board elections in July, building societies began urging Helen Liddell

to help defend their mutual status by toughening rules on elections to the board.

Mrs Liddell was asked to raise the required number of signatures on an election nomination from 50 to 350. She demurred, saying a change would make building society directors less accountable to the

Kevin McGuinness, company secretary at the Bradford & Bing. ley, said accountability had been dealt with. "We already began last year to require directors to seek reelection. We want to see a more realistic number of members to be required to nominate someone for an election," he said.

Mr Hardern is understood to be running as a sole candidate and is asking for members to back his own decisions in nominating further candidates for election Without a majority, it is unlikely that Members for Conversion could force Bradford & Bingley's board to propose a vote on conversion, which would be accompanied by windfall shares worth approximately £1,000 to

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JEREMY WARNER ON WHY THE TAKEOVER PANEL MAY FIND IT DIFFICULT TO SURVIVE THE **GUINNESS** REPORT

Guinness assigns Panel to the dustbin of history

Everybody else seems to have emerged from the wreckage of the Guinness affair largely unscathed, so why not the poor old Takeover Panel too? The Panel doesn't get it in the neck quite as badly as Ernest Saunders in the Government's long awaited report on the affair published this week, but the inspectors do reserve some of their fiercest strictures for this remaining monument to the principles of self regulation

The Panel is already under attack from Brussels, which wants to harmonise takeover regulation throughout Europe on a statutory basis. Could it be that the Guinness report will prove the final nail in the Panel's coffin? The timing could hardly be worse. The Council of Ministers is due to review the Commission's proposed directive next Monday. The inspectors' findings don't exactly bolster the Panel's case for preserving Britain's unique system of non statutory takeover regulation.

In some respects the inspectors' conclusions about the Panel are unfair. No system of regulation, statutory or not, can ever be foolproof against those prepared to take the risk of breaking the rules and then lie about it. If there were such a system, we would live in a perfect world in which there would be no crime or amoral practice.

Even the Guinness inspectors, armed with the most intrusive and dauntine

powers available in the jurisdiction, were confronted by non cooperation and lies on a massive scale, to the extent that eleven years after the event, they are forced to admit to not being unable to get to the bottom of some matters.

All the same, the underlying premise behind the inspectors' criticism is a reasonable one - it is that all financial scandals are to a greater or lesser extent about a failure in regulation. If the responsible regulator is unable to prevent a scandal as momentous as the Guinness affair, then it is plainly culpable to some degree.

There were obvious signs in the years that preceded the Guinness affair of cavalier and questionable practice on a growing scale in the City. Before the fall, Roger Seelig, Guinness's merchant bank adviser, boasted in an interview that he didn't play by the rules, he made them.

His corporate finance colleague at Morgan Grenfell, George Magan, talked of using every available inch of the playing field in serving the perceived interests of clients. Even an organisation as apparently asleep at the wheel as the Panel could not have helped but notice the the arrogance of these remarks and be warned by them that things were seriously out of control. The Panel should have done something, but it didn't.

Strangely, however, this is not the

main thrust of the criticism levelled at the Panel. Rather the inspectors concentrate on some specific failings in the the Takeover Code and the manner in which the Panel dealt with the Distillers bid and its aftermath.

For instance, the inspectors observe that the absence of a specific ban on the use of indemnified purchases of shares made it at least possible to claim that this practice was not disallowed by the Code. The inspectors also criticise the way in which the Panel ordered Guinness to pay compensation to Distillers shareholders of £85m in the aftermath of the affair as "based on an uniteal premise".

Further, the £85m together with the £54m Guinness paid to Argyll, the rival bidder, in settlement of litigation, would have been regarded by Mr Saunders and others as a reasonable additional expense to secure the prize of Distillers. In other words, the Panel allowed Guinness to get away with it. Despite having broken virtually every rule in the book, the retribution was tiny compared with the size of the reward.

"Once consummated, a takeover cannot realistically be reversed and the present case illustrates the difficulty of providing ex post facto justice for either a losing contestant or accepting sharebolders", the inspectors remark in a statement of the blindingly obvious.

The report moves closer to the heart of the matter when it observes that the Panel's powers of investigation depended on a shared ethic of truthfulness which the inspectors found during the course of their investigation belonged at best to a byegone age. "In the face of a party prepared not only to break the rules in secret but then lie in response to the investigator's questions, the Panel executive was confronted by a task which its founders never con-

Here again, however, the inspectors largely miss the point. The Takeover Panel is in fact as diligent and thorough a regulator as it is possible to find. Anyone who has dug into the archives, as I have, to discover how the Panel dealt on an hourly basis with the allegation and counter allegation that went on during the course of the Distillers takeover battle, cannot help but be impressed by the professionalism and thoroughness of its

Unfortunately, this is not enough. An effective regulator also needs to hold a presumption of guilt, and its approach to the task in hand must be that of the crusader. Most important of all, it needs to be the outsider peering in. The Panel makes a valiant attempt at being these things, but because it is an organisation set up by takeover practitioners essen-

tially for the benefit of takeover practitioners, it cannot ever truly provide this

function. Like all forms of self regulation, the Panel's main purpose is to adjudicate between members of the club, not that of providing a wider public interest sanction. Its natural inclination is to trust its members and it is bound to hold a strong presumption of innocence. This is what seems to have happened in the Guinness affair. Since then the Panel has considerable tightened up its procedures and it may well be that the awful nemesis of the Guinness affair is sufficient deterrent in itself to the City's wilder flights of excess.

Don't count on it, though. As we approach the top of the cycle once more, the instances of questionable practice, both in takeover activity and elsewhere in the City, are again multiplying. When there's a fast buck to be made, there are always those prepared to bend the rules if they think they can get away with it. The uncomfortable truth is that the Panel's old fashioned combination of poacher and gamekeeper roles continues to make this endeavour that much easier. The lessons of the Guinness scandal are clear, takeover regulation, like other forms of City regulation, should be put on a full statutory footing

Electricians reject 30% pay increase

The call for wage restraint by the Chancellor of the Exchequer seems to be falling on deaf ears. Barrie Clement, Labour Editor, discovers that

electricians have turned down a massive pay rise.

Chaphic evidence of growing inflationary pressure emerged yesterday with news that electricians in the construction industry have rejected a 30 per they believe will take a second cent pay increase over three stantial part of their work. years. Nearly 24,000 electrigamated Engineering and Electrical Union (AEEU).

sent back to the negotiating the first 12 months and include table in an attempt to secure a one-year agreement for a 7.5

the inflation rate. The vote against what will be extremely generous offer comes after a plea for wage restraint from the Chancellor in his

morrow's job losses.

However, electricians believe they did relatively badly throughout the recession in the construction industry and are seeking to take advantage of increasing skill shortages.

Paul Corby, a national officer of the AEEU, said electricians in the construction industry were angry over an attempt by the Electrical Contractors' Asof semi-skilled electrician who

Mr. Corby said a one-year cians voted by three to two deal granting electricians in Incomes Data Services reports -Union officials have been them around 5.4 per cent over come easier in the new year. unacceptable conditions.

According to AEEU acper cent rise, more than double tivists, the offer would have given their members 7 per cent in the second year and 6 per seen by other employees as an cent in the final part of the agreement. It is understood that it is highly unusual for electricians in the industry to reject

don Brown urged both sides of leadership. There is growing evindustry to bear in mind that to- idence that some union memday's pay rises could mean to- bers are dissatisfied with the AEEU and that they are seek-

ing a more militant line on pay. Mr Corby said his members were seeking a deal which would give them pay of around £10 an hour on prestigious sites such as the Millennium Dome, the Jubilee Line and the Royal Opera House.

plovers pointed out that negotiators on both sides had agreed sociation to create a new grade the package before it was put out to ballot. The employers,

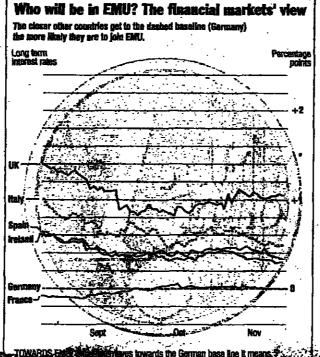
A spokesman for the em-

against the package despite ad- the engineering sector a 6 per that some 75 per cent of firms vice to accept from the Amal- cent rise "without strings" had are facing difficulties in filling set a precedent. The deal on of-vacancies and there is little fer to his members would give sign that recruitment will be-

> construction and information technology sectors.

Skill shortages are having an impact on pay, especially in the

"It means that some employers are resorting to exceptional measures to recruit staff and hold on to them. We're now seeing bonuses both to attract people and to persuade them to Green Budget on Tuesday. Gor- a deal recommended by their stay," the report said.



however the state of the state

AWAY FROM EMU: However, if they think the country won't be in EMU, that it will have higher inflation, and that there is a risk of a future devakration against the mark, then they will demand an extra premium for holding that country's bonds, so the line will move away from the base.

When will EMU start? The City Analysts' View.

Hikko Europe, Palae Webber, ABN Amro, JP Morgan, Deutsche Morges Grentell Saloman Brothers, Goldman Sachs, HSBC James Capel, UBS what probability they placed on EMU starting on time.

Probability EMU starts on time: (83% last week Probability EMU is delayed: (15% last week) Probability EMU never happens: (2% last week)

France the only threat to timetable

templated."

The financial crisis in the Far East continues to monopolise the attention of the pundits and shift the spotlight away from Europe and EMU. European stock markets have suffered heavy falls but the effect on the real economies of Western European countries should not be so serious.

Nikko Europe's Julian Jessop notes that the German stock market is down 20 per cent but it is still 40 per cent higher than at the start of the year, German banks are conservative and have only a limited exposure to the crisis economies and Asia, including Japan, takes only 8 per cent of German exports.

The risk of a rise in German interest rates has receded since the Bundesbank dropped hints that convergence could be achieved by Italy and Spain cutting interest rates rather than Germany raising its rates.

Meanwhile strong economic growth in Europe has reduced the risks of candidate countries failing the public sector borrowing test, and the only real threat to EMU proceeding on time now looks to be a sudden collapse in the French economy.

Öifford German

Potato disaster increases losses at Park Foods

It has been a bad week for Peter Johnson, millionaire Revenue figures released yeschairman of Everton Football Club. Everton are firmly rooted to the bottom of the Premier

Things have got so bad that Mr Johnson will need a police escort to the home game with Tottenham today.

He is also chairman and the major shareholder of Park Foods, the Merseyside marketing group best known for its Christmas hampers, which yesterday announced that its latest venture had gone disastrously

DJ Spuddles, Park Food's flavoured potato snack. unched last year, has proved to be an embarrassing flop. The product was targeted at the big food retailers but no contracts were signed before production began.

It has also got on the wrong. side of the health lobby, which classifies it as a chip rather than a baked potato. Spuddles has cost £11.7m to

date but total sales were a derisory £87.500 in the six months to the end of September. Park Foods traditionally loses money in the first half of

by 19 per cent to £6.2m. A new version of Spuddles will be launched shortly which can be baked, not fried, but the future of the venture hangs in the balance.

the year but this year losses grew

Mr Johnson owns 67 per cent of the group.

Public 'clueless' about self-assessment tax system

have returned their self-assessment tax forms have had them sent back because of serious mistakes, according to Inland

The report came as accounmained largely clueless on the self-assessment system of tax, with seven out of 10 people failing to realise they faced a £100 through. fine if they missed the 31 Jannary deadline.

A survey of self-employed

than half of the 3 million who were still to complete their self-assessment had not yet bothered to look at their forms.

Paul Belsman, of Levy Gee's tax division, Taxpro, said: Ignorance and confusion on tants warned that the public re- such a widespread scale, and so close to deadlines, is a clear indication that the self-assessment message is failing to get

"This is bad news for taxpayers. They are more likely to be dealing with Hannibal Hectaxpayers, conducted by Lon- tor than cuddly Hector the Tax no guarantee that the Revenue don-based chartered accoun- Inspector, star of the Govern- will have their assessment ready

Inland Revenue eventually catches up with them."

The 300,000 forms that have been returned by the Inland Revenue represent just 6 per cent of the estimated 5 million forms which were successfully completed for the initial deadline of 31 September this year. The Revenue had expected

10 per cent to be returned to senders. However a further 3 million self-employed taxpayers are

still to return their forms, with

More than 300,000 people who tants Levy Gee, suggested more ment's ad campaign, when the before 31 January, when the first self-assessment, fearing that payment falls due for the tax too many of the self-employed year 1996/97.

A Revenue spokesman said one-quarter of forms contained cosmetic mistakes but the level of serious mistakes, such as not signing the form or failing to fill in essential pages, was encouraging. "We are smiling, not frowning, at the numbers so far," the spokesman said. "A lot of the 3 million people will be represented by accountants. We always knew they would file late."

the deadline to be extended by your tax as well as paying a fine." one month in the first year of

Richemont launches £1 bn bid

to buy remainder of Vendôme

are delaying filling in their forms until after Christmas.

Gerry Hart, a former president of the Chartered Institute of Taxation, who now heads up Tax Team, the self-assessment consultants, said: "This is a tremendous shift in responsibility from the state to the taxpayer. The problem is that people are already saying, 'Forget it, it can't be done until after Christmas'. By filing late, Tax advisers are asking for you'll be paying interest on

Labour looks at coal options

proposals to prevent the closure of much of Britain's coal industry in moves which will raise hopes that some form of state support will materialise to keep deep mines open.

The measures under review include some of the recommendations made by the Commons Trade and Industry Select Committee after the 1992 coal crisis, when the Conservative government stunned the industry with plans to shut 31 pits with the loss of 30,000 jobs.

Richard Caborn, minster for the regions, regeneration and planning, who chaired the DTI select committee five years ago, ... is analysing a range of measures to help the industry. His role reflects growing concern within Government at potential damage to its reputation if RJB Min-

The Government is considering mines, earmarks up to half of the remaining 17 pits for closure. Government sources played down speculation yesterday that

Mr Caborn was being brought in as a fixer to salvage Labour's energy policy after concern at the mounting criticism levelled at the DTL Mr Caborn is to publish proposals to curb opencast mining, fulfilling one of Labour's manifesto commitments, but is understood to be extending his probe into the future of coal after the next wave of contracts with power generators expire in four years' time. Mr Caborn was said to be

"dusting off" the recommendations in the select committee report, which were designed to create a long-term market for coal. One proposal was to subsidise the state-owned British Coal to help it compete with - Cifford German ing. which owns most deep cheaper imports. Another pro-

posal was to encourage regional electricity companies to buy more coal-fired power and to cut their purchases of gasfired energy.

The DTI has rejected a request for subsidies from RJB, insisting that it would not be appropriate to give direct aid to a private quoted company. However Mr Caborn's involvement will increase speculation that some other form of support could be under discussion. Sources emphasised that coal was no longer a problem confined to the DTI and was being co-ordinated at cabinet level.

for the industry worsened after RJB agreed a supply deal with National Power which would reduce the amount of coal the generator buys by more than half. - Chris Godsmark is hoping for a recommendation

Africa's wealthy Rupert family. has launched a £1 bn cash bid to buy out the minority shareholding in Vendôme, which owns some of the world's most

glamorous luxury brands, including Dunhill, Cartier, Mont Carmey's Paris fashion house. Richemont, which already owns 70 per cent of Vendôme, is offering 495p a share for the remaining 30 per cent, valuing Vendôme, quoted in London and Luxembourg, at £3.45bn. This week the prospects

The price is a 26 per cent premium to the shares' pre-bid value. Vendôme's shares closed chief executive of Richemont, day."

Richemont, the Swiss-based from Vendôme's board, he said conglomerate owned by South that the company may decide not to proceed with the offer if the world's financial markets collapsed further and threatened Vendôme's markets.

However, speaking at the group's interim results, Joseph Kanoui, Vendôme's chairman, Blanc and Chloé, Stella Mc- said the financial turmoil had not affected the spending habits of its wealthy customers. Mr Rupert expects the deal

to go ahead smoothly. He said: This is a generous premium for the minority shareholders. We only approached the board yesterday. We wanted to give them an opportunity to announce their half-yearly results without 79p higher yesterday at 472.5p. being prejudiced by a deal. Though Johann Rupert, That strategy cost us 60p in one

– Sameena Ahmad

NatWest Markets sell-off announcement 'on Tuesday'

National Westminster Bank will announce early next week that it is selling off parts of NatWest Markets, its ailing investment banking arm, to Bankers Trust, a US investment bank, and to Deutsche Morgan Greafell (DMG), a subsidiary of Frankfurt based Deutsche Bank. One source said: "It [the announcement of the sale] should be early next week, probably Tuesday if everything goes swimmingly". DMG is poised to buy Nat West's equity derivatives business for around £100m. The parties are understood to be wrangling over exactly how many of Nat West's overseas equity derviatives staff will transfer to DMG. Bankers Trust is set to purchase most of NatWest's larger global equities business, which has been valued at around £300m by the City.

Floor space for Dresdner

Dresdner Kleinwort Benson (DKB), the investment banking arm of Frankfurt-based Dresdner Bank, is to build a new trading floor and to increase its London office space by more than 30 per cent. Dresdner Bank is spending £40m on refurbishing Ebbgate House, previously occupied by BZW, the investment banking arm of Barclays Bank. A new 25,000 sq ft trading area is just part of the planned refurbishment. Around 800 employees in DKB's global markets and global financial divisions will move to the new offices in the second half of next year. DKB's existing Fenchurch Street offices will house the bank's global equities and corporate finance divisions.

Exchange hit by Talisman

The closure of Talisman, the London Stock Exchange's settlement system, has knocked down the Exchange's income by around one-third. The Exchange earned just £70m in the six months to September, compared to £105m during the same period last year, following the decision last April to transfer responsibility for settlements to the independentlyowned Crest. But a substantial cut in costs, which fell by almost £20m to £46m, helped ensure that profits remained healthy. After tax and interest, a surplus of £18m was transferred to reserves, as compared with £10m this time last year. The Exchange said: "Our immediate tasks are to consolidate the operation of the order book, to continue to develop other new products on which we are currently working and to prepare for EMU and the Year 2000". The order book, which cost the Exchange £41.5m in development last year, was finally

launched last month. P&O in China joint venture

P&O is merging its bulk shipping operations in a joint venture with the Shougang Group of China. Lord Sterling, P&O chairman, announced the 50-50 deal in Beijing yesterday to create one of the world's largest modern dry cargo fleets. The agreement is the latest by P&O in a drive to boost shareholder returns. It's cross-Channel ferry business was recently given the go-ahead to merger with Stena, while P&O's container operations have been merged with Nedlloyd of the Netherlands. P&O Bulk Shipping operates 18 vessels transporting iron ore and coke. It made a small profit last year on sales of £130m.

Swedish bourses merge

The Stockholm Stock Exchange is to merge with OM Group, the Swedish derivatives exchange. The parties said the purpose of the deal was "to strengthen Stockholm - and thus the entire Nordic region - as a market place in the face of ever increasing competition from overseas bourses and financial markets". The OM Group will offer 11 OM shares for every three shares in the Swedish Stock Exchange. The merger, which was widely expected, should result in significant cost savings, according to the two exchanges. Per Larsson, OM's managing director, hinted that the new group could up its stake in the Helsinki Stock Exchange.

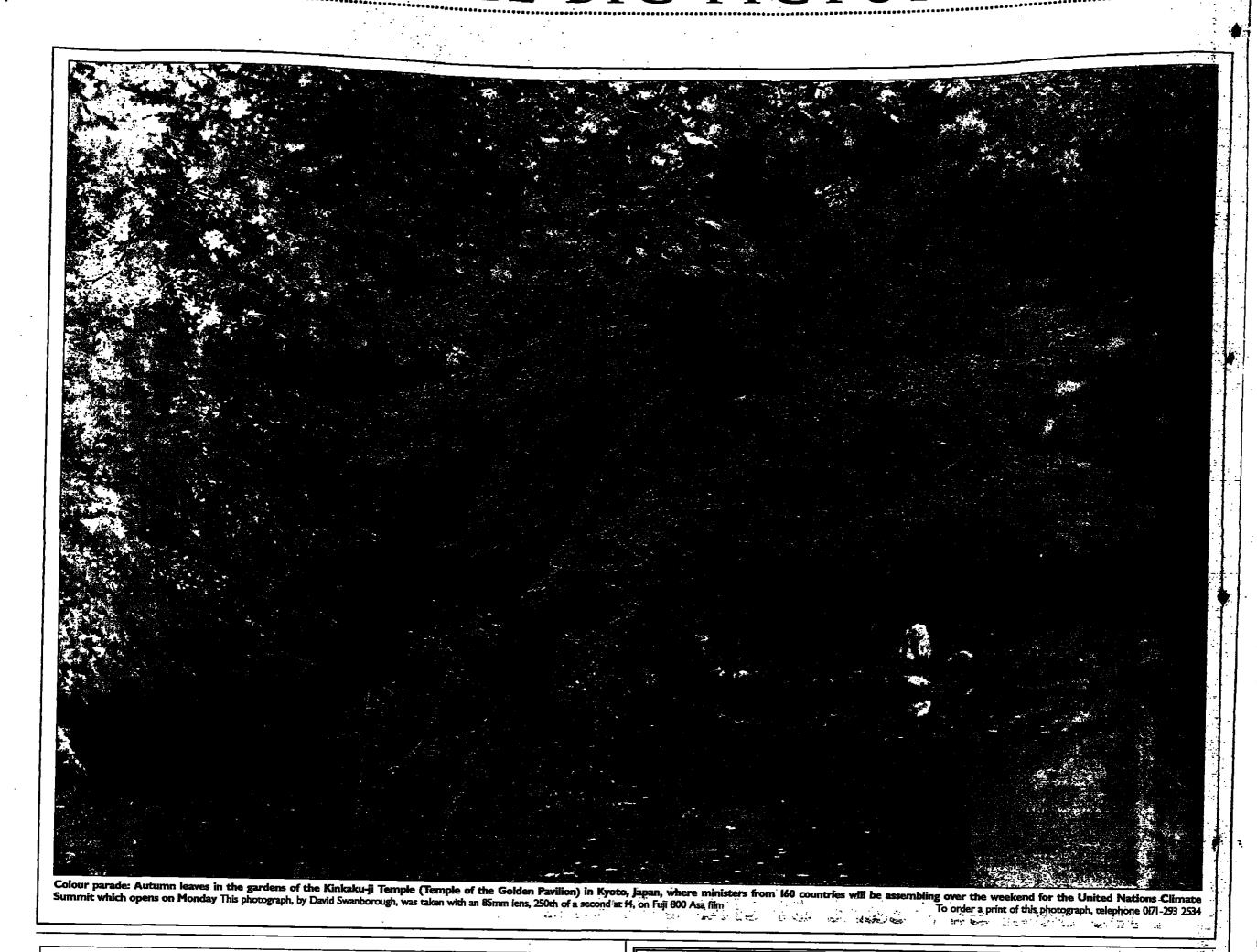
Shell outlines India plans

Shell has outlined plans for a big partnership in the oil business in India during meetings between the Indian Prime Minister. Inder Kumar Gujral and Mark Moody-Stuart, chairman of Shell Transport and Trading. The Anglo-Dutch oil giant said it had teamed up with another oil group, Saudi Arameo, to pursue projects in new markets and had identified India as their first initiative.

Sterling at three-month high

The pound climbed to its highest for three months following comments by the Governor of the Bank of England suggesting that rates might have to rise again. Eddie George said the economic slowdown was mouths away, and noted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer also expected the cost of borrowing to increase again. The Bank put rates up by a quarter point to 7.25 per cent this month. They are not expected to move again after next week's Monetary Policy Committee meeting. but in the new year. The pound almost touched DM2.97 yesterday, up from a close of just over DM2.95 on Thursday.

28/THE BIG PICTURE



SIEMENS

A cardigan, how lovely, no really, it's just what I wanted and paisley as well, how...unique.

This Christmas, got to Santa before he gots to you. Ask for the new Sicmons Sin voted the Best Business Mebile in the World by Connect magazine and which tellatine, the world's first colour display and a voice memo function.

Better
Talkno

etter Talknology ^{kom} **Si**emens TOMORROW IN THE SEVEN-SECTION

INDEPENDENT



SEX INC.

Joan Smith investigates the erotica business

PLUS:

U2 exclusive — Bono talks to the Sunday Review

Chritsmas food and drink special – brilliant recipes and ideas from our team of experts

Decriminalise cannabis – the latest news in the campaign that everyone is talking about

مكذا من الاحل

TIME OFF

Saturday 29 November 199

TRAVEL, LEISURE & SPORT



Chad valley: a trou au natron (salt hole) in the Sahara's highest range, the Tibesti mountain

Photography Mostin Budde

The secret heart of the Sahara

Chad is recovering from 30 years of war. The country now seems stable, and desperately needs to develop its economy. It would love to see tourists. Martin Buckley ploneered a trail.

EN-SECTION

My driver didn't want to stop. Our guide had warned him about coupeurs de route modern-day highwaymen - and he squinted with suspicion at the old man who ran tos us from a palm-frond but, flapping cms. Yet he looked harmless enough and I asked the driver to stop. The an told us that his baby grandson was and his daughter had set off with camel the previous night. But the st town was 100 miles away. If we met route, could we please give her a lift? ad been driving for a week through sic land of mountains, deserts and volcraters - with no roads. I kept thinkat in the United States all this would utional park. In America, freeways slice igh the wilderness, carrying you to the

very edge of every natural wonder. But in the Chadian Sahara you're lucky to find a row of marker posts leading you through the sands, or around a minefield. Astonishing landscapes and rock paintings can be reached only by those with time, money, and one or preferably two Land Rovers.

And nothing puts off tourists like a war. Chad was in a state of war for nearly 30 years. In the Eighties it suffered famine, became known as the world's poorest country, and received a fleeting audience with Bob Geldof. Today Chad seems to be stable, but it urgently needs to develop its tiny economy. And it would love to see a few more tourists.

The capital, N'Djamena, has the colonnaded, sleepy air of a Mediterranean backwater. Its market sprawls around a large mosque, and there's a wealthier, treelined avenue with banks, a patisserie, and épiceries selling wine and tinned fois gray. If you want to hire a vehicle, you can - at a price. But I got lucky. I met Father Bessita, whose parish must be one of the world's remotest - the tiny Christian communities scattered among the Arab tribes of the Chadian desert. If I would pay for the diesel, he'd take me with him on one of his thrice-yearly jaunts.

We drove into the semi-arid Sahel, and



rather to my discomfort, hunted – gazelle. We crossed great tracts of desert, with dunes where the wind covered our traces within minutes of passing. We came upon a broken-down truck whose inhabitants rushed forward with empty water-bottles, and le père took their grateful driver aboard. Then we ran out of water ourselves. We were crossing a plain where sheets of perilously soft sand alternated with tooth-loosening broken gravel. The heat was intense. I will never forget reaching the top of an escarpment and looking down on the desert town of Faya. Those thousands of tawny dots were trees, and trees meant water.

were trees, and trees meant water.

Faya has the makings of a popular tourist destination – a striking setting, some pleasant, rather Moorish buildings, a halo of palm fronds; it is close to desert, mountains and lakes. But there are artillery holes in its water-tower and there is no electricity. Chicken claws, goats' hooves and sardine cans litter the sand of the streets. You watch out for the scorpions, whose sting can kill a man. The only hotel offers, at £18, dirty,

airless rooms that would be over-priced at a fiver. But Faya is remote, so everything is overpriced there. Everything except the smuggled corn oil, tinned fish and petrol on sale at the Libyan Market.

Bessita is a big man, 6ft-something, fleshy and charismatic. On Sunday morning, he celebrated Mass in Paya's shady, shoebox-shaped church, his vast form in crisp white linen looming over the leaner congregation. Men played drums made from tinned shell casings, men and women swayed, girl-children danced, God became flesh and wine.

On Monday he headed out to his flocks in the eastern desert. And I went north west, towards Libya, having hired a battered pick-up Jeep and driver in Faya. My driver, Abdul, had never been this way before, and was nervous. I had good maps and a GPS (satellite position-finder), and was also nervous. By chance, we met a man who wanted to travel to the far side of the next stretch of desert, and he became our guide. We drove past orange dunes, and across white sand of utter flatness, driving

under a full moon late into the night without any need for headlights.

It was mid-morning on our second day out of Faya when we met the old man who wasn't a highwayman, and noon when we found his daughter, sitting out the midday heat in a small grove of thorny desert trees. Her mother crouched beside her, and a boy tended the camel. The sick baby's eyes were acid yellow - presumably hepatitis. I put the women and baby into the cab, and climbed on to the back of the pick-up. Dark, sum-baked sandstone rose around us as the jeep climbed the barren foothills of the Tibesti Massif, the tallest mountains in the Sahara. It's a land of stark inhospitality. bome to isolated and secretive tribespeople. mostly nomadic herders.

In late afternoon we saw before us a magnificent vision: a blood-red track through black rock leading down to the Zouar Valley, a broad sand plain locked in by rose-coloured sandstone cliffs 200ft high. At the checkpoint outside town, a soldier stared at me. I was quenching my thirst Continued page 3

NSIDE

CITY BREAKS
Two-day Dublin/3

WORLD FESTIVALS
Go-go or no-go? 6/7

SPORT

THE VOICE OF RACING

Peter O'Sullevan bows out/18

HERO'S RETURN

Bjorn Borg in London/22

SILK CUT

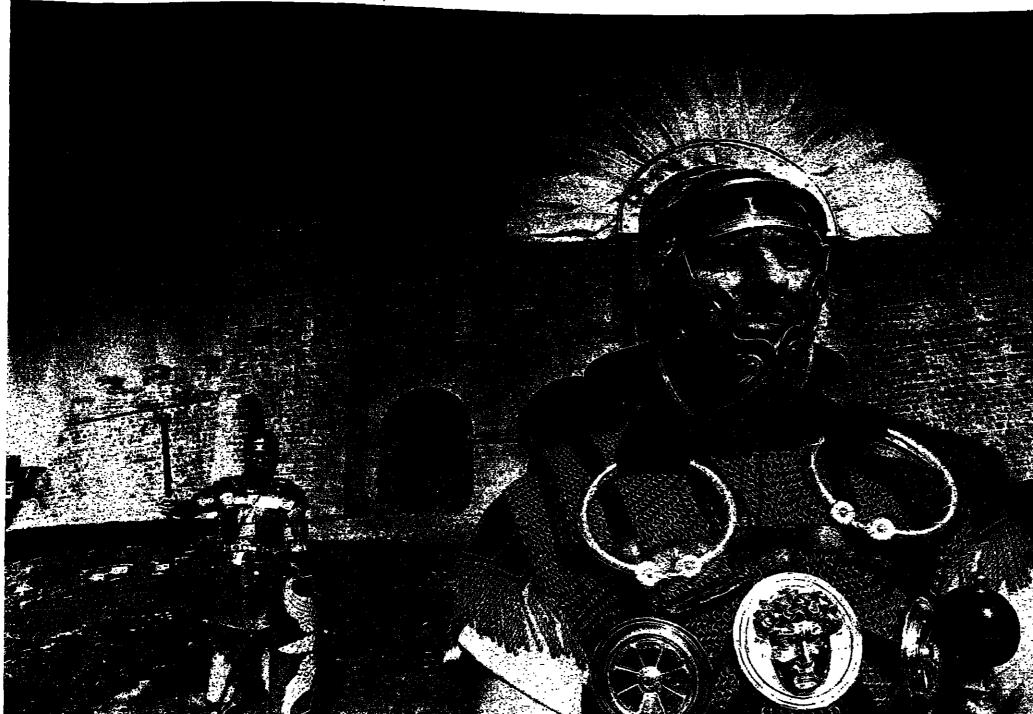
ULTRA

TOBACCO SERIOUSLY
DAMAGES HEALTH

SMOKING CAUSES CANCER

Chief Medical Officers' Warning I mg Tar = 0.1 mg Nicotine





oliday: South Shields is one of the few places in Britain where you can see almost the whole layout of a Roman fort

Back to barracks in Roman Tyne and Wear

ime and weather have been cruel to ruch of Britain's Roman past. But at outh Shields, there is a wonderful pportunity to look up, not down, at our lassical heritage, writes uy de la Bédoyère.

Inlike the usual Roman military establishment erched on a bleak hillside, Arbeia Roman fort at outh Shields is slap bang in the middle of rows of rraced houses, only yards away from guesthouses and fish and chip shops. Fort Street, Trajan Avenue,

This gem of Roman Britain has been exposed for early a century, but it's only in the last 20 years that has really come alive. It's a perfect visit if you (or our children) are tired of crumbling piles of stones. outh Shields' magnificent reconstructed Roman gateay impresses everyone who walks through it.

Hadrian's Wall, built in AD120 or so, ran from fallsend in the east to Bowness-on-Solway in the west. ut the lower Tyne was strategically vital. The Britons huld duck round the end of the Wall, just as the Gerans dodged round the Maginot Line, and cross over. o the Romans built South Shields fort. Sitting on the buth bank like a spider, it had a perfect view of the me valley. Long before the Romans arrived, Iron ge farmers lived here. Their roundhouse, which had irned down around about 250BC, was found un-

smeath the much later Roman parade ground. That parade ground probably belonged to a fort uilt around the time of Hadrian's Wall - but the irly fort has not been found, because in the

AD160s a new stone fort was built on top of it. The Romans loved standard specifications. And South Shields was a standard fort: playing-card outline, four gates, headquarters building, barracks, granaries and latrines. This is one of the few places in Britain where you can see almost the whole layout.

The fort had a thriving civilian settlement outside its walls. Some of the tombstones on display in the museum tell us about the cosmopolitan population. Regina, for one, was a member of the Catuvellauni, a tribe from the Hertfordshire area. She had been a slave, but was freed by her master, Barates. He was from Palmyra, in Syria, and commissioned Regina's ificent tombstone when she died at the ag espasian Street and Roman Road rather give the 30. He added a line in his own Palmyrene language, saying "Regina, freedwoman of Barates, alas!"

It's a touching portrayal of a woman who was clearly mourned. So, too, was the 20-year-old freedman Victor, from Mauretania in north-west Africa, "devotedly conducted" to his grave by his former master Numerianus, a trooper in the First Ala of Asturians (a cavalry regiment from north-western Spain); this is thought by some to be evidence of a homosexual relationship. Both tombstones are in the form of architectural frames, resembling buildings in Syria. They were probably carved by the same sculptor, who may have come from there.

South Shields was later adapted as a storehouse for the Emperor Septimius Severus (AD193-211) who came here early in the third century to fight a war. Severus, so the story goes, was fed up with his sons, Caracalla and Geta, spending their time on the razzle in Rome. Fighting in northern Britain would soon toughen them up. As the Caledonians were causing

trouble as usual, there was a good excuse for a war.

cleared away and about 22 new granaries erected. The garrison was confined to barracks in a fort extension. Severus invaded Caledonia, but his plans fell apart. He died in York in AD211. Caracalla abandoned the

campaign, and murdered his brother the next year. Caracalla met his own bloody end in AD217, but it wasn't the end of South Shields. It remained a stores base, and in AD222 an aqueduct was built to bring water. The inscription recording the event is on display in the museum.

Despite a fire in about AD300, the fort was rebuilt. South Shields became one of the most exotic locations in Britain; the new garrison was a unit of provincials with special skills. Navigating the Type and bringing up supplies from down south called for experts in moving goods around in small coastal lighters. The boatmen came from the province of Arabia, perhaps the origin of the fort's Roman name, Arbeia "Place of the Arabs", but no one really knows

The Tigris boatmen's commanding officer had Mediterranean tastes. He built himself a courtyard house with summer and winter dining-rooms, and a bath suite, using a plan similar to that of the houses of Pompeii, which had been destroyed by Vesuvius about 300 years earlier.

This part of the fort is being excavated at the moment, and earlier this year a Roman suit of armour was unearthed in the area, an extraordinarily rare find. The many other finds on display in the excellent museum include cameos and other jewellery, some made of jet. The jet came from near Whitby, and waste found there makes it likely that this was a centre of the jet industry.

Walking round South Shields today, you can't fail At South Shields all the usual buildings were to be struck by the imposing west gate. It's a replica,

Occluded front

built in 1986, and is best seen from outside the site, but you can go inside and climb up into the towers. It gives a superb idea of the original appearance of a massive, twin-portalled Roman military gateway.

Once Britain stopped being a Roman province after AD410, the history of South Shields becomes a mystery, but the fort must have had a use. The area became the Saxon kingdom of Deira. One legend is that King Oswin, who died in AD651, was born at Caer Urfa. Urfa just may be a corruption of Arbeia.

South Shields is a marvellous place to take children, especially those studying the Romans at school. The local authority could make a better job of signig it, because all too m South Shields when they visit Hadrian's Wall. And if it's a bit on the nippy side, where else can you walk out of a Roman fort and buy fish and chips, guaranteed to warm the cockles of the heart of the coldest Tieris boatman?

' Arbeia Roman Fort (0191 454 4093) is open Mon-Sat 10am-4pm, entrance to museum and grounds free, except for the Time Quest gallery: adults £1, children 50p. Access by road is via the A185/A194 from Gateshead. Approaching South Shields up the A194, watch for a roundabout exit to the BI303 (Station Road, becoming River Drive) that skirts round the north of South Shields by the Tyne and turn right down Baring Street. The fort is on your left. Access by Metro (South Shields Station) involves a 15-20-minute walk: head cast down King Street and carry on into Ocean Road, take the first left turn after the roundabout (Baring Street) and walk north for half a mile to the museum.

Guy de la Bédoyère is the presenter of Radio 4's scries The Romans in Britain', on Saturdays at 4pm.

AA Roadwatch

London, A1 between Walford Way, Mill Hill Carcus and Prveways Corner. Car-riageway reduced to two lanes for long term roadworks until 31st May 1998.

fertin London, Mr., between JS-LS, Wat-ford area. Roadworks and a contraflow, with off peak and overnight lane and car-nageway closures. A Softmph speed limit is also in place. Until 22nd December.

West Midlands, Mf6 J8. Three lanes North and two lanes South. %)mph speed limit in force with additional lane

West Yorkshire, M1 J43-J42 Stourton to Infilhouse (M62). A contraffow and a

50mph speed limit are in place until 13th

A803 East Dunbartonshire, Glasgow Road, Kilsyth Roadworks at Ballmalloch

omersal MS J22-J23 Highbridge to Bridgewater. Major roadworks due to bridge repairs. A three mile controllow is in place. Until 31st March 1998.

Cheshire, M53 between J9 and J11, Ellesmere Port and Chester. Contration

with two tanes each way and the hard shoulder in use for roadworks. Unjil

West Yorkshire, M62 J26 J29. Dewishury to Leeds (M1). A contration and a 50mph

speed limit are in place. Usbil 30th June

Out and about with AA Road-

closures Until 19th December

Road until 9th December.

14th December

SIMON CALDER

"Can you or your readers please help: me to survive a four-hour stopover at Los Angeles airport?" asks Kit Norman of Lincolnshire. "Tve suffered the bleak conditions in LA's transit lounge before: bad coffee in plastic cups, a 'duty-free' kiosk that seems to sell only crisps and chocolate, and a toilet block that makes you wish you'd gone before you left the plane.

"I have time to go through passport control and into the terminals, but where do I go from there? Does any of the many terminals have a shower, a decent restaurant or even a multi-gym with Turkish bath and mas-

"Things are slightly complicated by the fact that I'll be there on Christmas Day, but any tips to make transfers in LA bearable would be appreciated."

Mr Norman appears to be an Xmas-phile, since he will be stretching 25 December by at least eight hours by flying west. I fear, though, that he will find that corner of California cheerless. Civilisation (if downtown Los Angeles can be so described) is at least 45 minutes away, and the only airport massage I have experienced was 2,000 miles away at Chicago O'Hare where I was researching last week's "48 Hours" story. It lasted 10 minutes, cost the same in pounds and hugely improved the flight home.

Solutions to Mr Norman's commdrum will be published here before Christmas, providing that they do not include smuggling quantities of inflight miniatures off the plane for an impromptu transit lounge party.

In the film My Best Friend's wedding, the hotel featured is Chicago's finest the Drake. I did not include it among the accommodation options because of a nightly rate of around £200. But Mike MacFarlane of London says that

I should have persevered. "The 'rack rate' quoted by American hotels is almost always negotiable. I turned up at the reception of the Drake and asked for the price of a room. I was told \$330. I said I couldn't afford that much, and offered \$100. Eventually we settled on \$135 (about

Even though he had secured a 60 per cent discount, the story didn't quite end there. "While I was waiting for my credit card to be processed, I noticed a door to the back office ajar. Inside, a handwritten sign proclaimed "Absolutely the lowest rate tonight: \$125".

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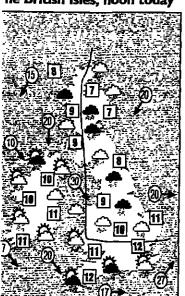
ورخوش

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Wherever you wander in the US. don't forget your passport; even if your visage is as old and raddled as the one above, you may be asked for photo ID to prove your age when you buy alcohol or cigarettes. And, increasingly, identification is demanded for any transaction involving a credit card or travellers' cheques. In the Burbank branch of Vons supermarket, though, the check-out clerk was prepared to let me pay with a travellers' cheque but without ID, providing I answered this question correctly: "Is it

VEATHER

he British Isles, noon today



ighting-up times

.16.04 to 8.21

.15.59 to 7.54

.16.06 to 7.52

.15.50 to 8.21

.15.57 to 7.43

...15.55 to 8.00

_15.45 to

General summary and outlook Scotland will have a mostly overcast and damp day with spells of rain and a chilly wind, although sheltered western areas will be drier with a few brighter spells. Northern Ireland will see a few bright or sunrry spells, but showers are also likely, perhaps merging to give some longer spells of rain at times. Northern England, east Wales and the Midlands will be cloudy with outbreaks of rain. Southern England and west Wales will have showers and a little sunshine.

Tomorrow will be a brighter day in most places with some sunshine, but a few showers are still likely the showers lurning to snow over the Scottish mountains. During the first half of next week a cold north-easterly airflow is expected to become established across the UK. Initially any wintry weather should be confined to high ground, but there will be widespread night frosts, and there is a possibility of snow flurries on low ground by mid-week.

Air quality

S England Wales C England N England Scotland

Good Good Good Good Good Good Good

SG2 Good Good Good Good Good Good

berdeea r 8 46 Cardiff agiesey c 10 56 Carlisie yr c 9 48 Cork alfast c 18 58 Dover irmingham m 9 48 Dublin lackpool c 9 48 Ediuburgh aurnementh c 11 52 Exeter rightan c 12 54 Glasgow ristol c 18 59 Guernsey	c 16 50 Inverness r 8 45 c 10 50 Ipswich r 11 52 r 8 48 Islos of Scillyr 11 52 d 11 52 Jersoy c 12 54 r 10 50 Liverpool c 9 48 r 9 48 Lendon c 11 52 c 11 52 Mauchester c 9 48	Plymenth r 11 52 Searborough c 10 56 Shrewsbury d 8 45 Soutbampton c 11 52 Seathend r 12 52 St Andrews r 9 48 Storneway f 9 4
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Birmingham __15.58 to 7.55

_15.53 to 7.55

..16.06 to 7.53

.15.56 to 7.44

8.23

8.02

..15.50 to

...15.55 to

east. Low M will be M is almost stationary C 12 54 C 5 43 C 18 64 F 27 27 In 12 54 C 13 55 F 13 55 F 15 55 F 15 55 F 15 55 Athens Ancklau B. Aires Bangkoi Barceler Beirnt Beigrade Beriin Bombay 12 54 2 36 f 32 98 s 23 73

Atlantic chart, noon today

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SOZ Good Good Good Good Good Good

Good Good Good Good Good Good Good

London
S England
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C England
N England
Scotland
N Indeed

High tides

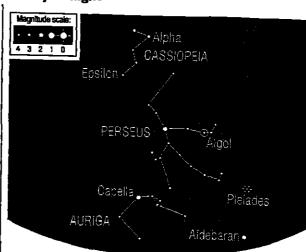
Liverpool

watch cat 0336 401 to the latest local and rotored kaffic news. Source. The Adjorno-ble Association Calls charged at 39p per min (chaap rate) 48p per min (all other times) ind VAT

Sun and moon

7.41 15.57 6.32 16.07 Sun rises: Sun sets: Moon rises: Moon sets:

The sky at night



The constellation Perseus, containing the celebrated variable star Algol, has risen by nightfall and is virtually overhead by 11pm to midnight. Minima of Algol occur around 11.30pm on Tuesday and 8.20pm on Friday.

Like a couple condemned to waltz till they die for the sin of being too intimate, the two stars of Algol perform an incessant dance, circling around each other in gravity's unbreakable embrace. As the duller partner in an unequal match eclipses its more dazzling companion, Algol fades. In four hours it loses well over a magnitude. Maximum eclipse lasts just 20 minutes before the 4-hour recovery commences. The whole performance repeats every two days 20 hours and 53 minutes. More than 100 minima of Algol occur in a year, but only a quarter of them are observable. This week provides two opportunities, both conveniently before midnight: 11.20-11.40pm on Tuesday the 2nd and at 8.10-8.30pm on Friday the 5th. Two stars in nearby Cassiopeiae are useful comparators for judging Algol's progress. Alpha Cassiopeiae shines like Algol at its brightest (magnitude 2.2), while Epsilon resembles Algol's darkest moments (magnitude 3-5).

Jacqueline Mitton

المكذا من الاحل

AM HT PM HT

01:00 6.9 13:16 6.8

10.32 9.1 22.49 9.1

06:27 12.6 18:43 12.7

10:51 3.9 23:09 3.8

12:15 3,4

Hulf (Albert Dock) 05:33 8.3 17:53 8.4



Liquid culture: Guinness and the River Liffey, above, course through the heart of Dublin; below, a door on World Street

Photographs: P Thurston/Telegraph Colour Library

48 hours in the life of Dublin

Each week, 'The Independent' provides a prescription for a perfect weekend break. This week, Daniel Ford offers a short cut to the soul of Dublin.

Why go now?

Christmas shopping turns Dublin's streets into a festival - with musicians on nearly every corner to entertain you through the v and into the picht. treat, but the shorter days and longer nights make the numerous pubs cosy with real fires. There is a buzz all over the city - both inside and out.

Beam down

Air fares between the UK and Dublin are low, even with £10 UK tax (included in all the fares below). The lowest fare on Ryanair (0541 569569) from Birmingham, Bristol. Luton, Manchester, Prestwick or Stansted is £48 return (book by 8 December); from Liverpool and Teesside, £59; from Cardiff £69; from Gatwick £79. Lowest of all is from Bournemouth (£39 before 19 December, and 7-29 January). Other airlines with scheduled services include Aer Lingus (0181-899 4747) from numerous UK airports, British Airways from Gatwick (0345 222111) and British Midland (0345 554554) from East Midlands and Heathrow.

By sea, the fastest route is on Stena Line (0990 707070). A weekend return for a car plus five people is £179 for the 100minute crossing from Holyhead to Dun Laoghaire, six miles south-east of Dublin.

Get your bearings

The best way to cover the six miles south from the airport to the city centre is by Air. Link bus. The half-hour trip to the Central Bus Station, or Busaras, costs £2.50.

The Liffey divides Dublin into two distinct areas. The north is where many of the galleries and theatres can be found, while the south is the more social centre, with hotels, pubs, restaurants and shops. Temple Bar is the main area for pubs -

many of which have live music - and restaurants.

Roads south of Temple Bar, Grafton Street and Nassau, offer more eateries and drinking-holes, along with the better shops. Dublin Castle and the magnificent Trinity College are also in this area. North of the river, most points of interest are situated around O'Connell Street.

The main Dublin Tourism Centre (00 353 1 605 7700) is in a converted church on Suffolk Street, near Trinity College.

Check in

Probably the most charming (and famous) of Dublin's hotels is the Shelbourne Hotel (00 353 1 676 6471), at 27 St Stephen's Green. It is also one of the most expensive, with a weekend rate of £170 per room per night for a standard double including breakfast; the weekday rate is £152. The band U2 has an interest in the top-range

Clarence (bookings through 0800 181535). At the other end of the scale, the city centre has plenty of hostels. One of the best is Avalon House (00 353 1 475 0001) in Aungier Street. Prices start at £7.50 in a 12-bed dorm; twin rooms cost £12 per person. Much of the mid-

range accommodation is around the Victorian suburb of Ballsbridge, a lively area to the south east of the city. Prices per person are in the £25-£30 range. Northumberland Lodge (00 353 1 660 5270), in Northumberland Road, is very welcoming, and charges £65 for a double room including breakfast.

Take a ride From Pearse Station, near Trinity College,

whisk yourself away on the excellent local train service - Dart, short for Dublin Area Rapid Transit - to Killiney. This magnificent and beautiful beach suburb is half-anhour from the city centre and is home to Dublin's rich and famous - particularly those who have made their cash in music. The station is practically on the beach, so take a short walk along the sand looking over Dublin Bay. If the tide is out you can stroll all the way along the beach to Dalkey; alternatively, come off the beach and walk along the Vico Road until you get to the sign for Killiney Hill Park. The walk up and over the hill is well worth it, offering fantastic views across the ocean and south to Wicklow.

You come down into Dalkey, where you can pick up the Dart back into the city. However, you would be doing yourself a great injustice if you did not stop at Finnegans on the Sorrento Road, next to The unequivocal front-runner for a mid-

the Dart station, for a pint of Guinness and the freshest scampi imaginable.

Stroll through the old cobbled streets of Temple Bar, the beating heart of Dublin's social life; the place is alive with street performers and musicians. A three-minute walk south of Temple Bar down Westmoreland street will bring you to the majestic Trinity College. Entry is free, which if you want to understand something of Dublin's literary and political history. You will, however, need to pay £3.50 to see the ancient Book of Kells in the spectacular Old Library, open 9.30am to 5.30pm. Various walking tours start at Trinity College: the guides are usually highly visible.

Lunch on the run

day meal is Beshoff Fish and Chips, 14 Westmoreland Street (and also at 7 Upper O'Connell Street). For £2.99 you get a fabulous piece of morning-fresh

cod in a superb, delicate batter, and excellent, crispy chips from potatoes grown on Beshoff's own farm in Tipperary. This is a Dublin institution, and an absolute treat.

Cultural afternoon In a city that has nurtured such literary heavyweights as Wilde, Shaw, Yeats, Joyce, Beckett and Swift, you'll want to make a bit of a pilgrimage. Heading north over the Liffley, a walk up the remarkably wide O'Connell Street brings you to Parnell Square. The Dublin Writers Museum (00 353 1 872 2077) is at No 18 (next door to the Living Writers Museum). Here you get a taste of Irish literary history, from early Christian

writings to the works of Brendan Behan (adults £2.90, children £1.20, Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sunday 11.30am-6pm). From here, cross Parnell Square East Road and head into Gardiner Row, where Belvedere College is situated - Joyce was a student here - then turn down into North Great George's Street, where you'll find the James Joyce Centre at No 35 (00 353 18788547) - open Mon-Sat 9.30am-5pm, Sun 12.30-5pm. The £2.75 entrance fee is worth it just to see inside this magnificent Georgian building, with its detailed stucco work on the walls and ceiling. The centre is full of all manner of Joyce-related information, including the original door of 7 Eccles Road (Leopold Bloom's address

in *Uly*sses).

For a less sober slant on the city's history, take the Literary Pub Crawl - this is £6 well spent. Starting at the Duke, on Duke Street, at 7.30pm Thur/Fri/Sat, actors take you around a number of pubs enacting scenes from Irish plays and giving anecdotes regarding the drinking habits of Dublin's writers: "I am a drinker with a writing problem," quipped Brendan

An aperitif

If you can get in, the Horseshoe Bar at the Shelbourne Hotel is the place for a predinner tipple. Alternatively, the locals will make you feel very much at home at Neary's, on Chatham Street. Enter beneath outstretched Art Deco arms holding flaming candles, and sneak inside the impressive gas-lit interior for a pint of Guinness.

The Coopers Café (00 353 1 660 1525) at the Sweepstakes Centre, Ballsbridge, is a treat. It'll set you back about £30 per person, but it is a fabulous modern restaurant, and suggests a taste of more good things to come to Dublin. Those on a tighter budget should head for the clean surroundings of Milano (00 353 1 670 3384) on Essex Street, Temple Bar, where you can enjoy a fantastic pizza or pasta dish for

Sunday morning: go to church

There is certainly no shortage of options in Dublin. For real tradition, try St Mary's Pro-Cathedral on Mary Street. You certainly won't be on your own; this huge cathedral is full of worshippers at 11am. Delivered entirely in Latin, this 90-minute service is wonderful, with the famous Palestrina Choir lifting the experience to

Bracing brunch

A five-minute walk down O'Connell Street, over the bridge and back into Temple Bar offers a couple of great brunch opportunities. The foremost of these is the Elephant and Castle (00 353 1 679 3121) where you can while away a couple of hours with a Bloody Mary and a choice from the impressive brunch menu in busy but comfortable surroundings. Book ahead.

Just across the road from here is Fitzers Café (00 353 1 679 0440), which has stark, modern décor with particularly disorienting unisex toilets. The starter menu here offers good, brunch-style fare.

A walk in the park

Phoenix Park, home of Dublin Zoo, may seem the obvious choice for a Sunday perambulation, but a better option is St Stephen's Green, a short walk down Grafton Street. This is an attractive area with a large pond, rambling hedges and sculptured lawns, and a large number of Victorian bandstands and gazebos dotted about.

The icing on the cake

Lots of cakes, in fact. No trip to the city is complete without a visit to Bewley's Oriental Café on Grafton Street. This elegant coffee shop is a Dublin institution, serving cakes, buns, coffee and full meals to hungry shoppers. On Sundays, it opens

The secret heart of the Sahara

Continued from page 1 with a mango brought from Faya, and the soldier looked as though he wanted to hit me. "Don't eat that thing in front of me," he spat, in French. "I haven't seen a mango for four years. I haven't been south or seen my

family for four years." The fate of black African soldiers from the south posted to the north is unenviable. Much of Chad's civil strife has been along the ethniclinguistic fault line between the black, usually Christian, south, and the Arab-Moslem north, a legacy of the French colonial carve-up. The genial and loose-limbed southerners are at a loss among the dour, self-sufficient Arabs. Mostly soldiers, they can spend many years posted in Tibesti, often unpaid for months on end. "What are we doing here?" I was asked by one desperate man who hadn't been relieved

for 10 years, "Are we prisoners of war, or what?" Desertion is impossible; they'd soon die in the desert, and if they were caught they'd be shot. So they wait, smoking Libyan cigarettes and listening on short-wave radios to football results and reports of African wars.

I reached into the box and handed the soldier a mango. In delight, he almost danced back to his shack to eat it. -Zouar is a cluster of mud-

block houses and palm-frond huts on a sand plain. Being responsible for a sick child brought home to me the statistics - that Chad has a severe shortage of doctors, and one of the world's highest infant mortality rates - 20 times Britain's. We found the doctor at his home in the military quarter. He examined the baby and diagnosed hepatitis and a severe lung infection. Would he live? I asked. "Oh yes," he

said, "if we treat him. There's just one problem: medicines. I never have enough drugs. At the moment I haven't even a

handful of paracetamol." And so we spent hours visiting Zouar's unofficial pharmacies. People travel huge distances for medicines. clinging to the tops of trucks that smuggle goods down from the Libyan border. They face dehydration and attacks by bandits, and, understandably, they sell the drugs at exorbitant prices. We

needed, but one important drug was missing. The next morning a guide took me through an uncleared Libyan minefield north, towards Bardai, deep in the Tibesti Massif. The roughlyhewn mountain pass scrapes the edge of a gigantic pink volcanic crater whose floor, far below, glistens white with

salt. In this mountain desert

found most of what we

there's a little moisture, and you see some wild flowers, and soaring black eagles. I explored for hours, amazed to be alone in a place of such extraordinary beauty.

That night we reached the palmy oasis of Bardai. I spent the night at the small French garrison, guest of six hospitable soldiers unused to welcoming European visitors. The captain was well versed in international politics, and it seemed reasonable to wonder what he and his men were doing in this remote spot. Was it their job, I asked, to monitor the Libyans, who are just a few miles north? In the late Eighties much of northern Chad was occupied by Libya, and General Gadafy's forces were thrown out only with French help. "No," he said stiffly, "Our sole task is to provide military assistance to the Chadian army." Tell it to the marines.

presented me with a large box of drugs for the doctor at Zouar, including the very one needed by the baby boy. It was extraordinarily generous, and brought a lump to my throat. And so it was that my return journey to Zouar was a triumphant one. On the way I stopped to look at prehistoric cave paintings like those in The English Patient - cattle, elephants and giraffe daubed on the rock, recalling that 5,000 years ago these barren mountains were covered with lakes and trees. There are still subterranean aquifers, and one day the hills may be green again. One day, too, if Chad stays free of war, tourists will begin to discover this astonishing landscape. Until

then, Tibesti will remain the

barren and secret heart of the

When I left Bardai the

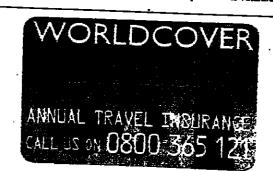
French adjutant, a Schwarz-

THE CHALLENGE OF <u>CHAD</u> enegger-muscled Polynesian,

The Africa Travel Group (0171-387 1211) offers flights on Air France from various UK airports via Paris to the capital of Chad for £910 including tax. In N'Djamena you can hire reliable four-wheel drive

vehicles, only with driver check his mechanical expertise, and that enough spares are carried. Twovehicle expeditions are safest.

There is no public transport, but you can rent a seat inside (or, for the suicidally hardy) on top of, a lorry or Toyota pick-up. Allow at least two months for the round trip. Trucks take up to 10 days to reach Faya, where you change vehicles for the journey to Zonar, and change agam for Bardai. Take your own water and food; breakdowns are frequent, and there is a recognised risk of armed hold-ups (much less if you travel in your own vehicle).



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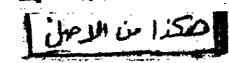
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From Finland to France, it's uphill all the way



There's no business like snow business: chalets litter Alpine slopes at Méribel

WHY WE GO WHERE

Caroline Stuart-Taylor, managing director of the Ski Club of Great Britain, explains why skiers are choosing the top five destinations.

1. France (24.9 per cent of the market for 1997/98 ski holiday hookings*): "It's doing well primarily because of the exchange rate; we're getting about 16 per cent more francs to the pound than this time last year. But France has also been working hard to promote itself, with things such as its special 'Kids ski free' offers in January."

2. Italy (20.6 per cent): "People swooped on Italy a couple of years ago because it was so cheap and having been there, many of them obviously found they like it. It isn't such a bargain now, but people still think it is."

3. Austria (15.4 per cent): "It has always been popular, particularly with beginners, because of the traditional chocolate-box ambience of its mountain villages; but in recent years it has been very expensive. Now the schilling has dropped sharply against the pound, so it has become cheaper."

4. Andorra (10 per cent): "The snow was good in Andorra last year, and it has always been a keenly priced destination. Because of the British ski school at Soldeu, it is a good place for beginners, which has also increased its popularity."

5. Canada (9.6 per cent): "It has done well over the last few years, and gained a reputation for good skiing; the advent of charter flights has made it more accessible."

The market-share figures are for bookings made up to the end of



Val d'Isère, one of France's biggest winter drawcards Photograph: Dave Roman

It didn't actually turn out that way. In ic bookings, it still reckons to cover 83 per bookings to be a remarkable 41 per cent

Carthy suspects that the figure could be

SKI TIP

To change the rhythm and intensity of your turning, ski in time with your breathing. Short turns require more air, so breathe more rapidly; for longer turns, inhale and exhale

40 per cent or more. Which means, for one season. The only real disaster area is Gerthing, that market shares are less likely to change dramatically from October onwards - unlike last season when, as well as Bulthe USA went from being 33 per cent up at this point to finishing the season 13 per cent down.

So who's doing well so far this year apart from France? Almost everyone: all the major resorts are benefiting from the overall growth in the market. Down amongst the skiing minnows, Finland is surging ahead, with a further 309 per cent increase this year; but Andorra - small in size, not in skiing - has shown the best performance among the big fish, with a 46 per cent increase on last season's impressive figures. The USA has bounced back, too, with a 36 per cent increase yearon-year - despite the fact that many skitrade insiders have been predicting big problems in the US market because capacity on charter flights to Denver has expanded dramatically, but the pound has become relatively less valuable against the dollar than against most European cur-

Austria is doing very well (42 per cent up), as is Switzerland (39 per cent); only Italy is falling behind the market, after a couple of years of dramatic growth, with an increase of only 19 per cent so far this

many. By the beginning of October last year, 240 skiing holidays had been sold there. The figure for this year? There isn't one.

For France this promises to be a great season. Last year, it made a very slow start: the HBS figures show that up to October 1996, only 29 per cent of its bookings for the whole season had been made. By comparison, Italy had done 44 per cent of its business, and the USA 52 per cent. Probably because of its proximity to Britain and the easy access via ferries and the Channel Tunnel, France continued to sell well through January and February, and was only outperformed (marginally) by a late run from Switzerland in March and April. This year, the new direct Eurostar service from Waterloo to the French Alps will make it even more accessible. If the snow is good, the French slopes will be full this

So holidays in France will have to be booked soon. But if you are thinking of going to the Czech Republic or Slovakia, you can relax for a couple of months. Statistics can become addictive; you keep finding interesting stuff - I found, for example, that 129 skiing holidays in the former Czechoslovakia were sold last year. And every single one was booked in the January/February period. Why? I have no idea.

GREEN CHANNEL

The ideas behind The Big Issue - the magazine sold by the homeless - have travelled far. In The Gambia, a magazine called Concern is being sold to tourists by beach boys (known as bumsters). It gives information about what local people would like tourists to do. so that our holidays are of some benefit to the locals. Adama Bah, a Gambian, set up Concern last year after visiting London and talking to a Big Issue seller. He has come back to London to attend Reuters' International Network for Street Papers conference this weekend and pick up some tips.

The main aim of publishing the mag-

azine is "as a tool for advocating a fairer and more equitable form of tourism," says Adama. "Gambian people are being crippled by the growth of foreignowned and all-inclusive tourism. It is crazy - we hardly benefit from tourism at all. Most of the money goes back out of the country. Even our farmers hardly benefit, because so much of the food for tourists is imported."

Concern encourages tourists to step outside their resorts and spend more in the local shops and restaurants. It also explains local worries about tourism, and gives local cultural and tourist information. Importantly, the burnsters are provided with employment, many of whom otherwise become "escorts" for foreign women or live a hand-to-mouth existence.

Adama is working with other Gambians to publish an "alternative guidebook" for tourists interested in staying in small-scale, local accommodation and learning about cultural sites off the beaten track. They are also organising community awareness programmes for villages that are directly affected by tourism. In a country where families are often supported on a single wage of £1 a day from hotel work, tourism to The Gambia must change for the better, he says.

"There is nothing idealist about this it's the only way out for us. We have to make sure tourism is sustainable and viable for the future. For us, it's pretty much a life or death struggle."

RED CHANNEL

Sydney is a city under siege. Not by any foreign invader, but by battalions of builders. So if crane-spotting gets you going, or you have a fetish for foundations, then you're in for a treat. But otherwise you may be in for a disappointment, with a number of city buildings either shrouded in scaffolding or being remodelled.

It is all part of the huge effort to get Sydney ready for the 27th Olympic Games, which start in September 2000. At the moment the city receives 2.5 mi lion international visitors a year. That is expected to leap to 3.6 million around the time of the Olympics, and up to 5.1 million by 2005. And while an estimated A\$2m (about £850,000) per day is being spent on the Olympic site itself at Homebush Park, elsewhere acarly A\$6bn (about £2.5bn) will be spent over the next three years on commercial projects such as hotels and apartments to cope with the influx. Watch out, too, for the great holes of Sydney: 22 of these appeared around the city in the recession of the early Nineties. Developers, having knocked down the existing buildings, couldn't afford to build new ones - and so they were simply left. Incentives are being offered to their owners to build on them, but if these are not taken up they'll be forced to cap the holes and landscape them.

Sydney is still a breathtakingly beautiful place, but until the work is finished it isn't displaying its best side. If you are going before then, when you pack your sun hat, it may be worth slipping a hard

Margaret Breen

Which is this year's hot spot (so to speak) for skiing? Armed with the Holiday Booking Survey, Stephen Wood figures out how the different countries are doing in the snakes-and-ladders business of the slopes.

FAX: 0171 293 2505

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This time last year, there was no doubt which was the most popular skiing destination. It was Bulgaria, where sales of skiing holidays were up 89 per cent over the previous season. In the early part of the 1996/7 booking season, up to the beginning of October, its growth was ahead of Canada's (76 per cent) and Andorra's (71 per cent). The traditional market leaders were trailing so far behind that they weren't even in Bulgaria's wake: France was down 12 per cent, year-on-year, and Austria's sales had dropped by a whopping 27 per cent.

True, Bulgaria was actually out-performed by Finland. Starting from a low base - a total of 12 skiing holidays in that country had been sold up to October 1995 - Finland's sales to the beginning of October 1996 had shot up to 545, an increase of 4.442 per cent. But it was Bulgaria, with sales of 7,419 holidays, which seemed set to be the star of the season.

the early months of this year, poor snow (Bulgaria was the only major destination to suffer in that respect) and political unrest in Sofia - which led to skiing chariverted to Ploydiv - conspired to reduce bookings; and at the end of the season, Bulgaria's year-on-year increase had slipped to 44 per cent - still impressive, but some way behind Canada and Andorra, which had maintained their growth rate (76 and 72 per cent respectively) throughout the season. And while Bulgaria was slipping, France had recovered sufficiently to end the 1996/7 season 4 per cent up on the previous year.

This year it's a different story. Bulgaria is still doing well: its sales to October this year are up a further 25 per cent on that good 1996/7 result. But so far, this season's star performer is unquestionably France, up 78 per cent.

All these figures come from Terry Mc-Carthy, director of the Holiday Booking Survey (HBS), which is produced by the market research company, ACNielsen. Every month the company surveys 300 high-street travel agents, and monitors the bookings taken on the premises; from this sample it then extrapolates figures for the whole market. Although the HBS does not

cent of the package-holiday market. And up to the beginning of last month (the most recent period for which complete figures are available), the HBS shows skiing up on last year and doing twice as well as the winter holiday market as a whole.

As McCarthy points out, all the major ski companies produced their brochures earlier than usual for this 1997/8 season, a continuing trend which has led to some bookings - not many - having been made this month for 1998/9. Last year's final reckoning showed that 36 per cent of the season's bookings had been made by the beginning of October; this year, Mc-

smoothly.





Everyone's gone to the wall

The Great Wall was there on the mountain tops, decked in mist and threatened with clouds. The problem was that we were not getting any closer to it ... Louise Jury's visit to China coincided with the country's biggest national holiday.

If you have endured the junction of the M4/M5 on a Bank Holiday Monday, then picture the traffic. Double it, then triple it for the full effect around Peking on the day I was there earlier this year. The Chinese, perfectly at home on bicycles, appear to lose all sense of etiquette once in a motorised vehicle. In fact, they

Should you ever expect to be in China on 1 October, adjust your travel plans. The Chinese take their national holiday, a testimony to Chairman Mao and the foundation of the People's Republic, very

They are building a giant new road towards the Great Wall, one of the world's greatest cultural treasures, but it isn't finished yet. Our coach was squashed in the jam and did not move.

In the cities, the streets throng with bolidaying Chinese, many visiting from the countryside, some apparently wearing their blue Chairman Mao suits as if they were Sunday best. Like the Japanese, they want you, the Westerners, to pose alongside them in their holiday snaps. Red flags fly in the streets, red Chinese lanterns hang from pillars and doorways, fairy lights bedeck the trees. Even the pofaced military enjoy a day out, posing in uniform in front of memorials to the appropriate state heroes - Mao and Sun Yat

And the Chinese are as fascinated by their cultural heritage as we are. Thousands of them take the opportunity of a few rare days off to absorb the beauty of the Summer Palace and the audacity of the Forbidden City. In Tiananmen Square, a thousand plants bloom in pots, bring-

on travel arrangements.

Source: TCI 1997

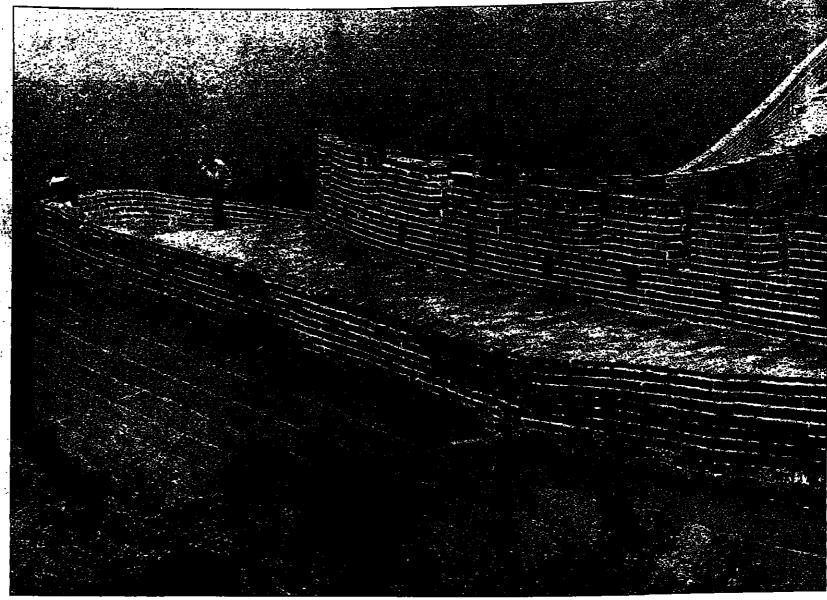
ing a militaristic grandeur and prompting a scatter-gun of camera flashes (though failing to erase the image of a lone protester standing bravely before a tank). Leaving Peking, thousands more head for the jaw-dropping vastness of the Great

Travelling in a party of 20 or so, we had spent the morning at the Ming tombs in the valley where 13 of the 16 Ming dynasty emperors lie buried. After kunch our organised tour group was cheerful as we travelled onwards to the wall. To the surprise of the local guide, evidently unaccustomed to Western spontaneity, some even burst into song. But after two hours spent barely moving, the prospect began to dawn that there was a risk that the Great Wall of China would remain a snake on the horizon.

Drastic action was taken. Our guide had a quick consultation with the driver and a colleague and decided that some wall was better than no wall. At a key junction, instead of turning left towards Badaling, one of the widest sections, fabled for its capacity to hold five horses prancing abreast, we turned right to a more obscure section. We were there.

Nothing can quite prepare you for the sight of the magnificent fingerprint of man that is the Great Wall. As you stare up from the coach park, it winds and twists steeply towards the sky, then curls round the mountain top and down before rising again. Even here, dozens upon dozens of visitors, mainly Chinese, were puffing their way up knee-challenging steps, clutching the prop of the handrail whenever offered, to look out towards the north and imagine Genghis Khan and his hordes arriving to terrorise the border guards. (In fact, he is supposed to have bribed them to let him in.)

At every tower, a gaggle of visitors would be haggling for a good price over the "I Climbed The Great Wall of China" T-shirts, the guidebooks and the signed certificate of your mountaineering success. There is even a camel to be clambered on and photographed with. But climb far enough, and even on this, arguably the busiest day of the year, the crowds disappear behind you.



The Great Wall of China ... as you won't see it on ! October

Photograph: John Voos

The wall has been restored at most of the points where you are likely to arrive. But it is almost more magnificent where it stands crumbling, with scraggy weeds forcing their way between the cracks, but a still solid testament to the builders who began their work in the fifth century BC. It is difficult to comprehend the thinking fend China's borders.

As I began the walk back, large, determined spots of rain fell. Figures began to don macs and head for their coaches (nearly all arrive by coach), but there was no mad rush to leave the wall. I guessed that perhaps the majority of visitors would see it only once in their

lives, and intended to make the most of it.

Yet back on ground, the adventure was barely over. If the traffic on the way there was bad, the return to Peking was unbelievable. The worst London roadhog has nothing on the Chinese. Absolutely no one would give an inch to another driver, even if that meant no vehicle moved. A behind such an astounding attempt to de- breakdown caused an impasse that was resolved only when the engine finally decided to function after all. In the absence of any other route, we had to journey home through Badaling, our original

> I have never seen so many coaches, not even at Wembley. Hundreds in rows, unmoving, beneath vast walls illuminated, as

darkness fell, with fairy lights and spotlights. Compared with the stern majesty we had witnessed earlier, Badaling seemed a Santa's grotto, a tourist creation. Though the sight was impressive, there was general agreement that we had been lucky to see the wall bleak and un-

Once moving, the traffic was terrifyingly reckless, overtaking on blind corners, travelling the wrong way down the other side of the road. The front coach seats, initially much favoured for the view, became tarnished with the horror of watching overtaking cars veer towards the side of the coach in late, desperate bids to avoid the oncoming traffic hurtling towards them. We

arrived back in Peking three-and-a-half hours late, as the national day was drawing to a close. Other parties did not arrive back until even later, at 2am or 3am, when we were already dreaming of overreaching emperors, invading Mongols and Genghis Khan.

A good way to avoid the crowds in China is to travel there in winter, you also benefit from extremely low prices. In January, for example, the China Thavel Service (0171-836 9911) is offering fully inclusive nine-day tours based on Peking for £659, including non-stop flights from Heathrow, accommodation, transfers and all meals. The only extra is a visa, costing £24-£35.

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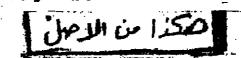
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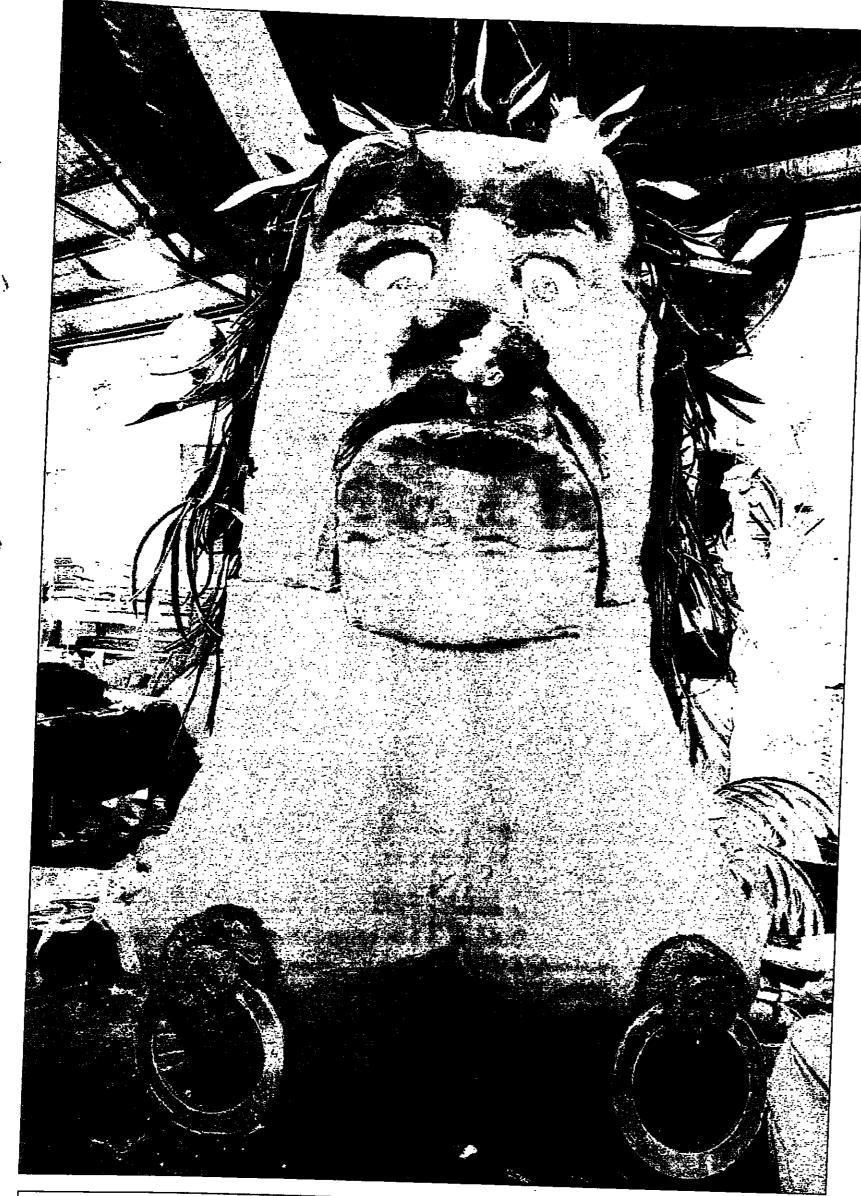
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continues on page 8.

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PLACE







A time and a place for tourists ... Sydney's Mardi Gras parade, top; Bastille Day in Paris, left; Edinburgh at new year, above Photographs: David Grey/Michael Ealer

Go-go, or no-go?

Festivals often provide the raison d'être for travel, showing people and places at their most alluring and exciting. Sometimes, though, they can be a complete pain, making transport overcrowded and spare accommodation nonexistent. Simon Colder, Louise Jury and Harriet O'Brien provide a guide to the pains and gains of various festivals around the world.

Destination: Brazil Event: Mardi Gras Date: the week up to and including Shrove Tuesday, which falls on 24 February in 1998

The ultimate street party takes place in the nation that lives on the street. For the week building up to the start of Lent, Brazil goes bonkers, with a frenzy of festivities. Some of these are formally organised, notably the huge three-day-long series of parades in Rio, when a dazzling sequence of floats decked with dancers celebrates the virility at the core of Brazil. Elsewhere, "Carnaval" is simply an excuse for reckless indulgence in alcohol, sex and dancing (sometimes, alarmingly, all at once).

Pain/gain ratio: You will not find such an intensity of humanity on any street, anywhere, though the Notting Hill Carnival (below) can come close. Unlike London WII, though, policing seems to be random with a tendency towards nonexistence. The thieving classes of Brazil, active at the best of times, enjoy a week of unfettered robbery. People leaving the parade in Rio, at least by the route I took, had no choice but to run a terrifying gauntlet of pickpockets who grabbed at any loose item - and many that were not loose at all. A few days later, in Salvador de Bahia, I was warned by the hotel staff not to venture out while wearing glasses. So, unfortunately, pain outscores gain. Similar thrills and threats apply at the carnivals in Havana and New Or-

Destination: Sydney Event: Gay Mardi Gras Date: February (main parade is on the last day)

All month long, Australia's largest city is the venue for a festival of performing arts, sport and community events. Even though Lent is already under way by the end of the month, on 28 February the streets of Sydney's city centre are given over to a ribald and raunchy celebration for lesbians and gay men at a parade more outrageous than in Rio.

Pain/gain ratio: There has been some controversy about whether "straight" people should attend, so heterosexuals may find the experience not altogether comfortable. But gay participants will find it a solid gold (lamé?) no-pain gain.

Destination: Poland **Event: Easter Sunday** Date: This falls on 12 April in 1998 Poland on Easter Sunday has the unnerving calm of Christmas in Britain 25 years ago. Arriving in Cracow on the Saturday, everywhere is fairly quiet. On the Sunday it feels like not a bird is stirring. The only activity is at every church where, as befits a Catholic country, masses are held al-

Pain/gain ratio: One visitor ended up in McDonald's for almost the first time in her life. Never was she so grateful for American fast food.

most every hour. Nowhere is open, not

Destination: India

even hotel restaurants.

Event: Holi Date: This falls on 13 March in 1998 The festival of colours is essentially a Hindu event but everyone joins in. People rush around splashing each other with coloured powder, everything (shops, offices, even tourist stalls) closes at least until noon, and as the day progresses so does the rowdiness.

Pain/gain ratio: anyone is fair game. If you go out anywhere you must expect to be quickly covered in red, black and green powder (which takes some time to wash off - wear old clothes). In many areas this is very jolly, but some women tourists have complained about being groped at the same time. It's best to avoid going out later in the day when there's often a high level of drunkenness

and traffic accidents are frequent in the cities. The real gain during Holi is that, very unusually for India, no one tries to sell you anything.

Destination: Paris **Event: Bastille Day**

Date: 14 July Arriving in Paris on Bastille Day without prior planning is a bad move. And find-ing an affordable hotel might prove im-

Pain/gain ratio: The city is a wonderful backdrop to celebrations. The fireworks which traditionally light the sky over the Eiffel Tower on 14 July are splendid. The firecrackers, which some Parisian youths think it is amusing to throw indiscriminately, are not.

Destination: Notting Hill, west Lon-

Event: Carnival

Date: August bank holiday weekend. Veterans of the Isle of Wight Festival in 1970 always drone on about how that was the biggest single-location festival ever. but the three-day thrash in London W11 each August bank holiday is possibly larger. London's Caribbean community is joined by professional partygoers from all over the world, for electrifying music, exciting food and a selection of intoxicating substances.

Pain/gain ratio: these days, very little pain - though no sensible participant risks turning up with much more than T-shirt, shorts and a small, sweaty wad of cash - and much gam.

Destination: England and Wales Event: Christmas Date: 25 December, but travellers are affected for several days before and afterwards.

The birth of Jesus is celebrated throughout the Christian world, but in some parts of Britain it is taken as an excuse for a near-total national shutdown. For a week beforehand, public transport is hopelessly overburdened. Then, on Christmas Eve, services are wound down. On 25 December itself, there is virtually no way of getting around without private transport. Most trains take the following day off, too, and many enterprises remain closed until 2 January.

Pain/gain ratio: Any gain to the traveller is difficult to assess, since most events are purely family affairs.

Destination: the Islamic world Event: Ramadan Date: variable; this year, probably starting on 31 December and lasting for one lunar month

The month of fasting is never a brilliant time to travel to the Islamic world, since the stress engendered by fasting throughout the hours of daylight can be intense for participants and travellers alike. In some areas non-Moslems are expected to observe the fast, too, while in public; most travellers would, in any event, wish to respect it.

Pain/gain ratio: For non-believers, no gain and plenty of pain. Entire nations can slow down to an ill-tempered crawl. The festival at the end of Ramadan, though, is often a hugely rewarding time to visit - particularly in the Arab

Destination: Edinburgh Event: Hogmanay Date: 31 December

The city that brought you Trainsporting also supplies the UK's greatest New Year celebration - so successful, that to quote the official guide: "You will need a pass to get into the street party on 31 December from 8pm. Passes are available free from the Hogmanay Box Office by personal application or by post"; the address for both is 21 Market Street, Edinburgh. Much of the city centre will be cordoned off, and part of the A1 closed down, while 300,000 people greet the New Year with music (from the likes of Jah Wobble and Salsa Celtica) and possibly with some assistance from strong liquor, though the official guide solemnly warns that "People under the influence of alcohol may be refused admission.'

Pain/gain ratio: Transport links between Scotland and England are full to bursting before and afterwards. But the fun factor here is likely to be much higher here than at the parallel event in London's Trafalgar Square.

Presents for the future

A partridge in a pear tree won't get you far. The gift for the person who has everything is the world. Fortunately, writes Simon Colder, a veritable globe of travelrelated presents can be found.

Bus gift vouchers The international coach operator Eurolines (0990 143219) sells gift vouchers in denominations of £10 and £20 - one of the for-

mer and two of the latter would be more

than enough for a London-Paris return.

Airline gift vouchers

All right, so airlines don't sell gift vouchers - but they do the next best thing. This is a Miscellaneous Charges Order (MCO), made out in the beneficiary's name to a certain value and exchangeable for air transport. In theory an MCO can be had for as little as £1, though these days that will get vou nowhere fast; BA's lowest adult fare is £13, between Westray and Papa Westray in Orkney.

An MCO issued by an lata airline can be used on other carriers. If the gift proves to be unwanted, then a full refund Fear of flying class

If the love of your life refuses to soar to the skies with you, then offer to take the anxiety out of aviation. Aviatours (01252 793250) runs one-day courses based at Heathrow (next one 21 February) and Manchester (28 February).

A senior British Airways training captain and psychologists spend the first part of the day putting fears to rest. The course culminates in a 45-minute "round the houses" flight in a Boeing operated by a specially selected crew. The success rate is 98 per cent, High-priced Heathrow is possible providing you have paid in cash. costs £179; moderate Manchester £149.

Keeping to time Patek Philippe has just launched a new watch that shows two time zones at once, priced in the region of £6,000. The one I use, a Casio, cost £24.99; I'm on my third already, the first two having met untimely ends, but I would need to get through another 397 before a Patek Philippe is justified.

Thomas Cook doesn't exactly offer a gift subscription for its rail schedules, but for £117.60 the company will supply your true love with 12 months of the oldest continuously published train schedule in the world, the European Timetable. Its bimonthly Overseas counterpart costs £58.80.

Reading matters

The arrival of Condé Nast Traveller to Britain's newsstands makes a glossy addition to the range of travel magazines. A year's worth will cost you £32.40, or £38 with three free bottles of wine; call 01858 435359. If you order by 1 December, the subscription will begin with the February edition, published in January; you will be sent a gift card to present to the beneficiary in the meantime.

The more established Wanderlust magazine appears bi-monthly. An annual subscription, £15, is available on 01753 620426. National Geographic doesn't just offer a

subscription - the recipient receives "A handsome personalised Membership Certificate suitable for framing and a brief illustrated history of the Society". Plus 12 issues, and some excellent maps, for a total of £24, if you write to the National Geographic Society, PO Box 19, Guildford GU3 3BR.

Mixed blessings

The strangest present of the year is "Gate 23", an audio compendium of flight departure announcements at Heathrow airport, compiled on cassette by Jake Tilson, 16 Talfound Road, London SE15 5NY (0171-701 3689), for the modest outlay of £6.

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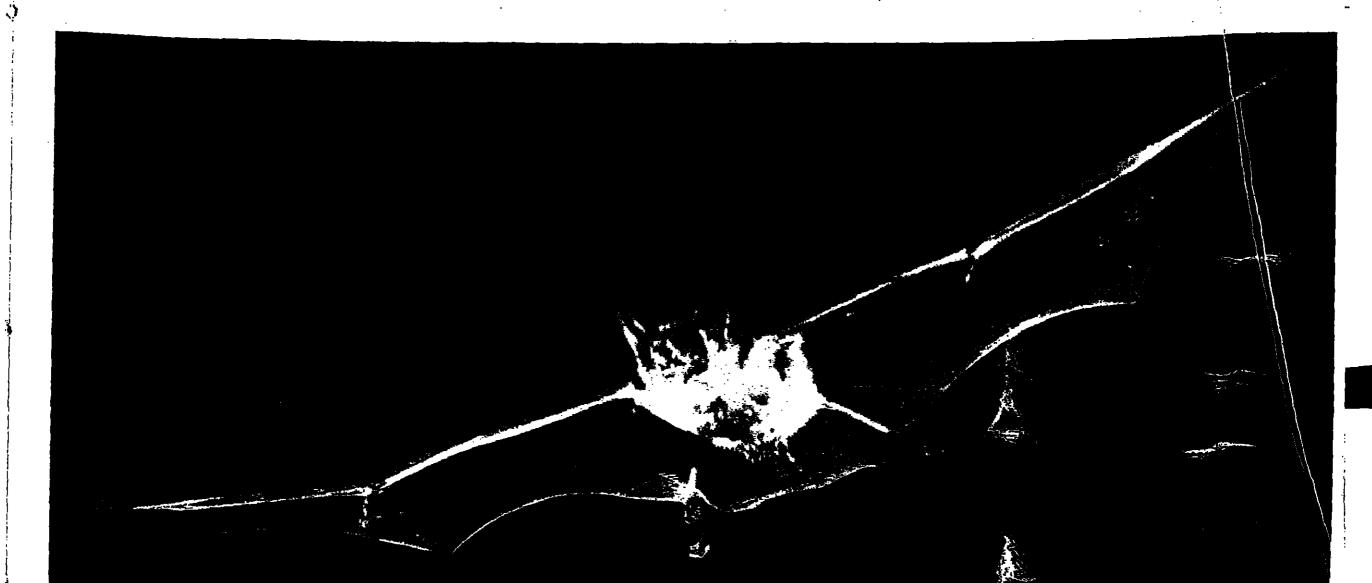
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Take Off also appears on page 6.

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Insect-seeking missile: bats use ultrasound to detect their prey. The mouse-eared bat, above, is one of the 15 species resident in this county

Photograph: Werner Curth/Ardea

According to the boffins, it shouldn't have left the ground

For anyone who wants to watch wildlife, the most important precept is to keep

still. By walking straight through a wood, you clear the ground ahead of you; but

and greatly increase your chances of seeing some memorable sight. Out in the coun-

try, nothing attracts attention like movement. To a static observer, one flick of a

deer's ear will betray the fact that a large animal is standing in a thicket, otherwise

unseen. Cats and foxes employ stillness as a form of attack, crouching motionless,

and therefore unnoticed, as prey comes into range; but many animals and some

birds instinctively use immobility in defence. A pheasant, surprised out in a field,

will crouch down and not move a muscle till danger passes. A squirrel disturbed

by passing humans runs up a tree, flattens itself on a branch and does not shift

again until the coast is clear. To numerous wild creatures, stillness is salvation.

Awareness of Britain's bat population is very much improved. But, writes Daniel Butler. there's still much to learn about these strangest of mammals.

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VEL *

"Take a good look at your local bats now. You're not going to see much of them for the next five months: they're going torpid." Chris Thain, of the Radnorshire Wildlife Trust, peers through the narrow window built into the gate closing off a disused railway tunnel on the Gilfach Nature Reserve. "I found a natterer's bat settling down here last week." he observes. "It's an ideal hibernation site: humid, frost-free and with

a steady temperature." His interest is indicative of a transformation in our attitudes to the largest but leastknown group of British mammals. Given this country's reputation for pioneer zoology, it seems remarkable that until recently bats were almost totally overlooked; the first specialist book on British bats was not published until 1946. It was the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981 that really got things going: "This gave protection for the first time," explains Tony Bat Conservation Trust. "There was a huge boost in interest, and dozens of local bat groups were formed almost overnight."

The result was that amateurs began to add significantly to scientific understanding: "Bats used to be considered hard to study but in fact they are easy if you track them down to their roosts - particularly if you use ultrasound," says John Messenger. of the Vincent Wildlife Trusts.

He illustrates the shortfall in knowledge by pointing out that when he started his present job in 1984 there was only one bat species on the Radnorshire mammal list: 10 others have since been discovered. Indeed, it was this sudden interest that led an amateur bat watcher to notice that his local pipistrelles had two ultrasonic call ranges. This was followed by further tests: "They look identical, but DNA testing shows them to be more different than tigers and lions," says Messenger. This means Britain's 14 resident bats will soon become 15, once the newcomer has been formally named and catalogued.

Similarly, it was enthusiasts, such as Ginni Little, of the Penzance Bat Hospital, who noticed that "vagrants" (blown in from Europe by storms), were significant:

Hudson, senior conservation officer at the "A local tree surgeon brought in an immature male Nathusius pipistrelle," she explains. Because it takes two years for these to reach sexual maturity, this meant it must have been born here." Other records soon confirmed that it was relatively wide-

spread: now it's an official migrant.

NATURE NOTE

properly - becoming active during warm spells throughout the winter - most are now becoming torpid at the end of a frenetic autumn spent hunting insects. Those still visible are likely to be this year's youngsters. trying desperately to build up body fat for the lean winter months ahead. However, Although many bats don't hibernate as temperatures fall and insect numbers

plummet, the animals will spend more and more nights resting in hibernation sites. Abandoned mines, caves and culverts are favoured by most species, but others, such as the noctule, prefer hollow trees. Such hibernation patterns are probably better understood than bats' mating habits.

long, births occur in June. This is thanks to delayed fertilisation, whereby females store and nurture male sperm cells within their bodies through the winter. How they overcome rejection by their own immune systems is still not understood. The heavily pregnant females also manage to hunt while carrying a foetus that

Although gestation is only three months

body weight. Once born, the youngster is raised on the richest milk of any terrestrial mammal and, depending on the species, within three to six weeks it is hunting alongside its mother.

For most people the pipistrelle is much the most likely but to be encountered. This is mainly because of its fondness for modern buildings. Any bat seen emerging from the eaves on a summer evening is almost certain to be a pipistrelle (although such roosts are abandoned in winter for more thermostatically stable subterranean lairs).

Like all our bats, they are insectivorous, hunting with ultrasound, principally at clawn and dusk, making use of high-frequency echo-location to detect their prey.

Although the principles are now well understood, until recently it was a puzzle how such a tiny creature manages to fly while carrying a powerful echo-location device. This was calculated to be as aerodynamically "impossible" as the flight of the bumblebee, until it was discovered that the same musc les are used for both flight and soundgeneration. Even so, scientists still do not fully understand how bats predict when hunting for mys will burn up more calories than they produce. Thus, even on a summer are scarce, yet they may hunt at midday during a mild January. So if your local bats have already disappeared, it is temporary - you may well see them before Easter.

Where to fired out more about bats: 'Bats' by Phil Richard'son (Whittet Books, £7.99) is an excellent general guide. The Bat Conservation Trust produces a free leaflet; send sac to 15 Cloisters House, 8 Battersea Park Road, London STV8 4BG. Anyone finding an injured bat should contact the Penzarice Bat Hospital, which runs a 24-hour help live (01736-365687).

'The punters are surging up and down the aisles like spring tides'

The setting: a huge Christmas fair near Malmesbury. The challenge: to sell copies of your own book. The technique: think of yourself salmon-fishing...

Without raising my head I can see a woman steering straight for out table. A day and a half at this game have taught me

that timing is vital. It's exactly the same as salmon-fishing: when you feel a fish take your fly, every instinct tells you to strike - but in fact what you must do is wait. So, now, I tell myself, do not look up loo soon. Here she is, in front of our left-hand show-card. I raise my head and give a glowing smile.

Waste of time and effort. The woman a large, middle-aged person wearing a dark-green cardigan and skirt - is glaring sideways at the card with an air of incomprehension. I see her lips mouthing the title of my book - When the Country Went to Town. "What's it about?" she barks, in a sharp

"Well - the countryside marches, and the rally in Hyde Park on 10 July."...

"Is it any good?" What the hell is the answer to that? After rapid sifting of various alternatives -"Brilliant", "Rubbish" - I come up with the feeble "Not a lot!"

She grabs a copy and glares again. Just as I am gloomily deciding she has no interest in country affairs, she suddenly says, "All right - I'll have five."

Five copies at once! Ye gods - a bonanza. A peep into the customer's bag reveals that it is stuffed with £20 notes. My publisher, David, takes her money while I scribble five signatures on the title pages - and then we both eagerly scan the crowd for more of her ilk.

The scene is one of the Christmas fairs run by that redoubtable organiser, Mary Howard. To have yellow AA signs made out simply with your name on them, you must be a big cheese - and she is: by her own efforts she has raised some £350,000 for charity, and her fairs make £50,000 a year for charitable causes. So the road signs say simply "Mary Howard", funnelling fans into Hullavington airfield, near Malmesbury.

The fair is in one of the hangars; an amazing structure about 300ft long, nothing but a gracefully curved roof, which sweeps right down to ground level on either hand. Inside, the press of punters is terrific: wildeyed, and 98 per cent female, they surge up and down the aisles like spring tides. When word comes round that today alone

DUFF HART-DAVIS

nearly 3,000 have paid the £4 entrance fee. I can well believe it.

But how does one engage their attention? Jump up and down? Gesticulate? Shout? Smirk? Look the other way? Grin like an ape? Stand up? Sit down?

Professional shop-keepers doubtless have their methods, but for a beginner, the uncertainty is hell. David has a theory that it is essential to keep our table well stacked with piles of copies - a state of play which (a cynic might remark) is all too easy

My mind wanders to the disused airfield outside. I keep thinking how, over in East Anglia, the Thurlow Hunt has just won a major conservation award for its rehabilitation of a Second World War bomber base: there, volunteer workers have broken up the old runways and returned the land to grass, com and trees. Will that ever happen here at Hullavington? Or will the vast, level expanse be used for houses, in preference to more scenic areas, as many profoundly glad that my stint behind the people feel it should?

Look out, though. Concentrate. Here comes an obvious countryman: red face, hefty build. He takes one look at the book and says, "I should think that's pretty boring."

come back with, "It's fairly light, anyway". Bright blue eyes fasten on me. "In fact." I blunder on, "it's so light you more or less have to hold it down to read

For a moment I am speechless. Then I

No spark of amusement softens that stare. Off he goes, clearly with the im-

pression that I am crazy. Feeling in need of a stiff whisky, I mutter to David, "No more jokes", and square up to a girl of about 16. Even if she is penniless, at least she has a lively face.

"Were you at the rally?" "Of course!" "And on one of the marches?"

"The day from Stow-on-the-Wold." "Great!" Immediately she buys a copy for her boy-

friend. "He wasn't in Hyde Park," she says, "so please write something really rude in it." "What - like 'Up yours'?" "Not as rude as that."

She settles for "Mark - Where were you?". Then suddenly she says, "Oh, look. I need two more". She pays cash, professes herself delighted, and is gone. With time to study the throng, we notice the same people coming past again and again. They are in slow orbit, searching for Christmas presents with ever-increasing desperation. Several raise my hopes by veering in towards us, but then cry out: "Where's the canteen?"

By 5.30pm, after seven hours on duty, I have had enough. I decide I am not cut out

Napoleon famously dismissed England as "une nation de boutiquiers". But did he realise what physical stamina shopkeepers need, to stand around all day; what mental reserves they must have, to combat lack of trade, boredom and insults? I salute them - even if, at the same time, I am

SOMETIMES IT'S EASIER TO TALK TO SOMEONE YOU DON'T LIKE

Duff Hart-Davis



When you have a problem, it's the most natural thing in the world to want to talk it through with someone. But who?

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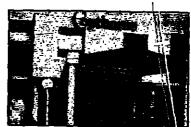
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THE INDEPENDENT

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The weekend break includes a two night stay. In one of the luxury Connoisseur rooms, with breakfast, a meal for two in the hotel restaurant and a free bottle of champagne to celebrate.

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Q: What is the star rating of the Copthorne Calais?

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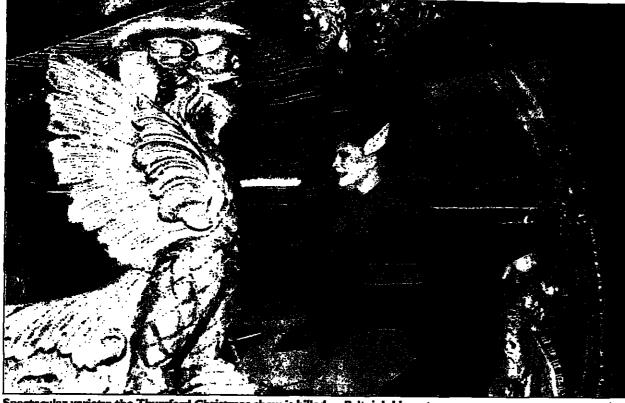
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are available.

10/OUTINGS









The great Christmas barn bonanza

Britain's biggest Christmas spectacular takes place in a tucked away village. Louise Duffield went to the opening night.

If someone asked where in this country you could find the largest Christmas show, few would suggest a venue outside of London. There would be even fewer who would suggest Norfolk. And if anyone said "in a muscum barn in a remote village", then it could only mean one thing - that they'd already been privileged to see one of Thursford's Christmas spectaculars. Billed as the largest Christmas production in England, the Thursford Spectacular is quite some festive sight. But what is all the more remarkable about the show is that it is staged in an enormous barn which, for the rest of the year, is home to a collection of steam engines, organs and fairground memorabilia.

The Thursford Christmas Spectacular started as a small-scale carol concert 20 years ago and has become so popular that every show is a sell-out, and visitors travel from all over the country to see it.

ach a combination of chous, su the Tower Ballroom, Blackpool, sits alongside musicians from the band of the Prince

of Wales's Division (Lucknow) on the programme, while the Thursford Dancers put their interpretation on such pieces as "Lord of the Dance". "Rockin' all over the World" and "Dance of the Snowmen". The St Nicholas Choir, a bagpiper and a harpist are also vital parts of the production, not to mention the live turkey, basket of ferrets and dove flypast.

It takes three weeks to turn the home of The Thursford Collection into a sparkling winter wonderland of glitter, tinsel and lights. The barn itself contains 20 steam engines, a magnificent, 100-year-old fairground gondola switchback ride, a mighty Wurlitzer organ, and a host of musical fairground organs. A further 30 engines

are awaiting restoration. The seed that was to grow into this unique collection was planted when the The visitors founder George Cushing, now 94, visited a traditional fairground as a boy. He was Thursford Collection's Christmas Spec-

It is the variety of the Thursford event amazed and bewitched by the steam engines, tacular with her son Adam, 12, and daugh-people of my age wouldn't like the Christthat is unique: nowhere else can you see which sparked off a life-long passion for the ter Nicola, eight. e, dissing objects. As a young man he dancers and musicians. The organist from saved every penny he had and bought a Sharor: This is probably the fifth time that second-hand traction engine, and worked as a contractor. He still has that machine - and dozens of others, which he saved from the scrapheap so that future generations could live the age of steam. The love of steam engines bought Mr Cushing into contact with mechanical fairground organs, which he soon began adding to his collection. Then came the beautiful 19th-century Gondola switchback fairground ride, built in the Norfolk factory of the merry-go-round creator Frederick Savage. Today it is powered by electricity for convenience, but in

its heyday it ran on steam. But one of the most popular attractions at Thursford is undoubtedly the Wurlitzer organ - formerly housed in a Leeds cinema and the fourth largest in Europe with 1339 pipes. Resident organist Robert Wolfe gives regular afternoon concerts.

I have been to one of Thursford's Christmas shows, and I still think it is so magical. I keep coming back because to me it sums up Christmas. It has something to appeal to most ages, because the show switches from serious music by the choir to humorous geese strutting around the stage. If you don't like one thing, then you don't have to wait long before something different appears on stage.

I think it would be well worth going to visit Thursford when the Christmas decorations are down, and the regular attractions

Adam: I thought the show was great. There was a lot of singing and dancing, and there were animals and everything involved. My favourite bit was the last bit, where the balloons came down and the doves flew past.

The first time I saw the Christmas decorations, I thought they were very good. I Sharon Lloyd, an office clerk, went to the liked the shops because they sold a wide variety of things. I bought a badge. Some

Show and I thought they were quite good, so I may like to come back and have a look at the ones they have at Thursford.

it was fun and exciting, and the songs were good. It was very colourful and the decorations were lovely. I had loads of favourite parts, but I especially liked the song "Santa Claus is Coming to Town", and when they were doing "Lord of the Dance", and the bagpipes. I had never seen any bagpipes before. I hope I can go again. I bought some flashing Christmas tree earrings in the shop.

The Thursford Christmas Show is staged at the Thursford Collection, Thursford Green. Thursford, near Fakenham, Norfolk (01328) 878477). There are two shows every day, at 2.30pm and 7pm, until 23 December, but the only tickets available are cancellations. Bookings for next year's spectacular, from 12 November to 23 December, are taken in writing from 5 January.

The museum collection is open from seen steam engines at the Royal Norfolk tober, with live musical shows daily from the mechanical organs and the Wurlitzer. Admission: This year's ticket price for the show is £12.50, or £11.25 for the party rate. Next year it will be £13, or £11.75 per per-Nicola: I thought it was brilliant because son for groups of 15 or more. Under-eights are not admitted. Admission to the museum collection is £4.50 for adults, £4.20 for senior citizens, £3.75 party rate and students, £2 for children four to 14, and under-

> Access: Accessible for wheelchairs and pushchairs everywhere.

> Toilets and baby-changing: Clean, several of them, but quite crowded at times. Baby-changing facilities in the toilet for the

> Shops: Three, well-stocked with good quality gifts and locally-made items, but, again, quite crowded at times.

> Catering: Several different options. including ice-cream parlour, café and tearoom. A picnic area outside, near the adventure playground.

Education: School trips available, helping with modern history and steam.

THE INDÉPENDENT

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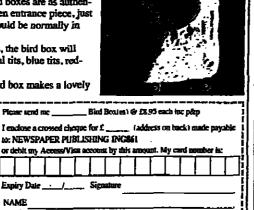
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you're quick about it. Each Saturday, our travel pages carry thousands of words designed to inform and inspire the traveller, whether of the armchair or adventurer varicty. We also use a few good photographs. Our belief that there are many other excellent amateur photographers out there was confirmed last year, when The Independent joined forces with Wanderlust magazine to stage our first Travel Photograph of the Year competition. The quality of

the entries was outstanding. So this year, we have expanded the competition to four categories: the Natural World, Action, Face-to-Face and Black & White. We have also brought in one of the most famous names in photography - Nikon, the camera of choice for many of the

1996 entrants. The top 40 entries will be displayed at Destinations '98, the travel exhibition to be held at London's Olympia

from 26 February to 1 March next year.

The winner will earn a package of valuable prizes, including one that money can't buy: a photographic commission from The Independent.

Nikon will provide the winner with an F70 SLR with 24-120mm AF-D lens - worth more than £1,000 - while Bellingham will provide a 335 camera bag and Ventile photo vest (total value £300 plus).

The three winners of the other categories will each receive a Nikon F50 with 35-80mm lens, plus a Bellingham Photo Hadley bag.

You can enter at any time before the end of the year, but take the first step now by writing in for an application form, which includes the competition rules.

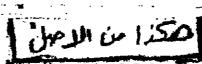
The address is Wanderlust (Photo of the Year), PO Box 1832, Windsor SL4 6YP, Alternatively, you can complete the form in the new edition of the magazine, which went on sale this week, price £2.80.

INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY A WINTER BREAK IN IRAQ

DON'T MISS TOMORROW'S.

Jeremy Atiyah visits ancient Mesopotamia

Plus: How to take your children skiing and still have a great time



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SPECIAL OFFER

SPECIAL OFFER
Free all this month, blind delse,
perhaps salling, theatre, or
good food/wine, offer includes,
good company, afflicate, attractive, professional male, 34,
Devon area, \$33845
STRICE IT LUCKY?

Tell der, titelfinger, exherited

STRIKE IT LUCKY?
Tall, dark, Intelligent, educated, turny, reddees, kind, charming, retaxed, gentle, striking-looking male, 33, fixes travelling, seeks affectionable, Intelligent, independent, professional temale, for companionship. Staffs. 23975
ELIGIBLE MALE.

ELIGIBEL MALE
You are warm, loving, intelligent and lemaile, you live life to
the full, love beauty, you like
theatre, outdoors, you look
after yoursell and love children.
Male, 36, seeks you. SW area.
173988

WOMEN SEEKING MEN

CANDLELIGHT tive, forminare blonde, 37.
Lall, professional male, romantic times. Wost note: \$24185 Driagon SLAVER
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Yet tile's not tust. Petus, attractive, intelligent trumette, onjoys travel, theatro, books and water, seeks warm, attendate, professional malo, 49-58, to care and share. London/S East. 274174

area. 174145

RAVELY HOPERUI.

NAIVELY HOPERUI.

Slightly bohemian. ex-businesswoman, 50s, now relocating, seets solvent, caring, loving companion to match her adventurous outlook, any rationality. Loves travelling, music, reading, eating out, plus usual interests. Southern England. TE4152

ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS

Sill on top of life but not over

ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS
Still on top of the but not over
the hill (yet), haven't stopped
since the 60s. Independent,
well-travelled, petitle, blonde
culture vulture, seeks male,
same lilk (not elikl), GSOH.
London area. 124150

ON THE FIRST
DAY OF CHRISTMAS
Romantic, tun-loving, protessional lemale. 30, GSOH,
enjoys theatre, keep-fit, interior
decorating, jazz music, seeks
protessional, simitar male,
under 40, great personality,
GSCH, retionality unimportent,
for infendabilip possible
romance. London only. 134205

PHYSICS GRAD
Female, 33, with questions still
to answer, once into physics,
now into metaphysics, with a
love of mountain-biking, cinema and exploring, seeks male,
to join in the fun. London.
174186

SOMERSET AREA off the beaten track holidays, seaside walks, food, wine, good conversation, seeking male, 38-48, GSOH, to enjoys the above with, 1274195 CHRISTMAS CRACKERS Lorariously decorated, containing quality gifts, original jokes, but no cheap pager hat, wants removing from box, but not just for Christmas, by dynamic, tender gentleman, with integrity and charisma. Northemptonshine area 2th 412

area. 224197 area 274197
SEEKING
SOMEONE SPECIAL
Attractive, intelligent, professional, brunette fernale, 40+, 5°E, with a warm heart, enjoys cultural activities, walks, food 4 wine, interesting conversation, seeks sincere fun professional seeks sincere, fun, professional male, 33-45, for friendship/relafiosehp. London area. 274148
SOUTH COAST LADY
Genutre lemsle, 40-something, seeks loving, caring male, similar age, for lasting friendship.
274180

ASIAN CRICKET FANATIC ASIAN CREAT FAMALIC Fairly Evely, serious, but released lady, 48, 52", girlsh SOH, likes gardering, theatre trips, correctly/drams, rock/ classic/blues music, tanatical cricket supporter, seeks profes-sional educated mete, 45-50, with GSOH, for triendship/rela-CARING AND CUDDLY Female, 40s, Into everything, seeks exhicated male, 30s/50s, with GSOH, for camp friend-ship, East Anglia, 174187 irreh, outgoing, professional temate, enjoya travel, horse ridrig, stoing, comma, conversaton, flearature, seeks attractive, with male, 45-55, for Christmas parties, triendahips, possible romanco. Dovom/Plymouth based, 274003

parties, friendships, possible parties, friendships, possible romanco. Dovon/Plymouth based. 274203

RAVISHING BLONDE

Attractive lemale, 34, sooks attractive, intelligent soul mate, to share cosy nights in and explore the world. Cambridge. 274168 EXTRACTIVE,
EXCITING LADY
Educated, single, with GSOH,
would like to most handsome,
professional male, 33-43, 61-,
who is honest, affectionate and
articulate, for hieraship/initiatorship. London/Home Counties. Ship. Lond 134190

TA190

MACINE
Very stylesh, sim, professional, intelligent, easygoing, tum, attractive, blonde temate, 5% varied inforests, enjoys social-sing, seeks tall, handsome, sporty, professional, intelligent male, GSOH, for friendship relationship, Miclands, TR4156

SUSSEX LADY
Sim, directive, odurated SUSSEX LADY
Sim, attractive, oducated widow, 65+, warm personality, own home/car, enjoys viciling places, classical music, the-dro, sooks, writing, cooks kind, academic/professional gentioman, with similar intercest/age, for caring raintensity. 274165
NEW BEGRANINGS
Crestive, pretty, witch Creativo, pretty, with, wiso, sim, dark, hokstic lemale, late 40s. varied microsts, eclocitic lastes, seeks roal man, as best inend/soul mate. Hugs/humour/

EXTRAORDINARY LADY EXTRAORDMARY LADY Agricultural, professional busi-nasswoman, 39 and still single, seeks almitair extraordinary man, for brisk walks in the Peak District and cosy nights in by a roaring log fire. Call me now! 124159

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GREGARIOUS
SAGITTARIAN
Wordly-wise femalo graduate,
40, blondeish, loves squash
and scuba-diving, where possible, seeks comtrasting male, to
share candlelit meals, wine and
fun-loving romance. London.
274173
BRISTOL?
One woman and her doe, both

BRISTOL?
One woman and her dog, both N/S and enjoy beach wates and fireside evenings. Female, 40, with varied bag of interests, seeks intelligent male, for friendship and good company. S West. 224182

100% GENUINE
Fun-loving, warm, professional female, early 40e, 510°, enjoys walking, puts, theatrs, wares to learn to stil/sall. If you are a similar male, 40-50, I would love to hear from you. 224153

REAL WOMAN
Charming. Serene, beautiful inside and out, 43, seeks erfoulate, succasshul, altractive mate, 40a50s, 6'+, for warmth, excisement and mutual giving. Manchester. 234178

GLOUCESTERSHIPE
GLOUCESTERSHIPE
Sim. practical depays/p-pearth

GLOUCESTERSHIRE
Sim, practical, down-b-earth,
it mother, 44, 58°, student of
performance & art, likes daydreaming, dancing, walking,
reading, animals, music, the
sea, drinking beer, seeks someone to grow old with, 784184
LIVELY & SPIRITUAL LIVELY & SPIRITUAL Humorous, loving, silm female, 45, atternative health therapist, loves life, people, travel, Irish music, the soe, mediation and spiritual/personal growth, seeks 524183 SOUIL MATE REQUIRED

SORIL MATE REQUIRED Down-to-earth, fun-loving, prolessional fernale, 30, 5 °10",
smoker, seeks fun but sensible male, 28-40, GSOH essential,
for friendship, maybe more.
London area. 27:3947

NO PLACE LINCS HOMER Marge seeks Homer, 30-40, for
sedentary life style and small
amounts of action. Non-life
threatening. NW London.
27:3982 Table POP MY CORK
Bubbly, sweet white wine, 1961
vintage, seeks mature, warm
claret, to make my Christmes
rosy. Stationdshire. 123973
COULD IT 8E YOU?
Intelligent. attractive. mixed-

Intelligent, attractive, mixed-race ternale, 30s, enjoys diving-out, cinema, theatre, socialis-ing, seeks intelligent, attractive-mate, for exploring London Bis. 973055. T3955 Female, 30-something, seeking fun-toving male, who can alleviate this loneliness. London area. 17:3880

Chat Lines

MAKE ME LAUGH
Continental, Independent ledy,
53, GSOH, engays art, music,
gardening, cooking, waiking
and travelling, soeks warm,
omotional, honoel malo, 50-60,
for hiendahip, possible relationartist's PALATE
MEDIS SOUL MATE
Sim, derik-hoired painter, 60,
seeks forious food fover and
elimulating componion, to onloy
cetting are in contral London.
Call mo for more information.
TEMODI
LOYAL AND CARENG
Formale, no ties, sim, vegetarian, solvent, enjoys keep fit,
waiking, sociolising, speks,
NS, professional male, 50-60,
for hiondship/possible rolationshap. London/Horts area.
12:3861
CLASSICAL OFFER
Honest, outgoing temale, NS,
artist, onloys reading the cisdics, cooking, chascical music,
sooks male, 50-60, N/S, with
smilar inferests, for compantonehip, Dorsol ones. 12:3946
LIVELY LADY
Petito, independant handful,
sooks charming genitionan, 35-

LIVELY LADY
Petito, independent handhul, seeks charming gentleman, 35-45, to keep her in order. S Midlands, 12:3979
YOUNG, FREE AMD SINGLE Unfortunately! Very attractive, sim, protessonal formulo, 20, 54°, onloys singing, dencing, pubs, clubs, who bars, ressurants, ceeks good-looting, professional maio, 22-28, GSCH, for long-term refetilenship. Landon area. 27:4002
HOW ABOUT IT?
Happy, letsly lox, 22, with mental prowess, seeks gorgeous skinhoad, 22-31, for woodfand walks. Nottingham area. 27:3942

773942 NO MORE LONELY NIGHTS

NO MORE LONELY NIGHTS Happy, fur-loving formate, user-40s, seeks acmeane to care, share and laugh with. Are you the one for me? 733840

TOP OF THE WORLD

Tall, fizzy, Intelligent, attractive lefty women, 49, pessionate about animal rights and ite, likes chilling, thinting, laughing, warking, 50eks influent, decent, wholesome, emotionally-intorate, furmy, kind man, for love. Norfolk. 273982

NEED A FUTURE?

Flegant, tall, sim, warm, affectionate widow, 49, seeks land, successful, professional male, 47-59, to share books, classical music, country weeterds and current events. London area. 273983

FRIENDSHIP FIRST Lively, outgoing, professional female, enjoys travel, horse indiing sking, chema, convensaiton, iterature, seeks stractive, vitty male, 45-55, for Christmas parties, thondship, possible romance. Devon/Phymouth romance. Devon/Plymouth based. 17:3953
DRAWING IN THE DREAMS Warm, interesting, lively graduate lemsle, tass vacancy in the heart department, for an active, intriguing male, 46-52, with larsighted dreams and dynamism to fulfil them. Cardill area.

23:3976
COMPETER IN ME CONFIDE IN ME

CONFIDE IN ME
Bubbly, mature, sightly eccentric, down-to-earth iemale, 23,
NS, N/D, into films, wellding,
badininum, good conversation,
seeks handsome, solvent male,
20-30, N/S, for triendship/ please call, 1273938

ABSOLUTELY GENUME Loyal, educated, professional, attractive gentleman, N/S, GSOH, required for hopefully permanent relationship, by permanent relationship, by honest, independent, motivat-ed, selective, sim, feminine, professional, attractive female, professional, attractive female, 28, enjoys country life, travel, theatre, equestrianism. Home Counties. \$2,4007 Courties. 274007

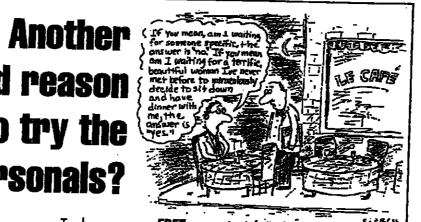
Cultured, with, cudily, reflective, mischievous male, any age, possibly Jewish, sought by fall, attractive, green-eyed lemale, 40, with GSOH, for future times. 273884

MID SUSSEX.

Attractive warm creation who

MED SUSSEX
Attractive, whal, copressive, whal, copressive, caring woman, 43, loves taughing, countryside, theatre-lopers, conversation, reading, seeks intelligent, soft, lough, creative man, 46s, who taughts but is serious too, to explore together. 273862
LIVELY & SPIRTUAL
Humorous, loving, silm temale, 45, atternative health therapist, loves life, people, travel, hish music, the sea, mediation and spiritual/personal growth, seeks emotionally aware man, 38-48. McCWiarwickshire/any-where, 273965 38-48. M40/Warwickshire/arrywhere, 27:3965
ROMANTIC PISCEAN LADY
Looking for caring male pertner,
60-70, N/S, GSOH, tor permaner/looking relationship cood
lood/music, socialising-interwhend with caring farmiy, it
won't be a dull life but a homely one. North East Surrey,
27:3930

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Attractive, Catholic, warmhearted, home-toving, single
samale, 30s, enjoys the est,
countryside, languagee, coeks
professional, Christian male,
40s, genuire, sincere, and
tooking for a happy, permanent
relationship, Miclends, 273066
WEST LANCS FEMALE
Lady, talls 30s, 51s, strawborry
blonde, still in good rick, seeks
decent, Irlandiy, caring gentleman, 35-45, GSOH, who is
interested in cricket, theatre,
summirm in share site of the prointerested in cricket, theatro, swimming, to share file's ups and downs. 273963

GOOD-LOOKING

GOOD-LOCKING
SINGLE MUM
South West. good-tooking,
quiet, fun, creative and solvent,
single mum, 39, seeks male
companion, 35-50, for companlonsing. 1273959

TILL THE END OF TIME
Fair, ellm, individualistic, crealtive, compassionate, fail,
attractive female, 40s, hazel
syes, seeks attractive, silm,
spontaneous male, 38-50,
with width, depth, affection,
for meaningful relationship.
22.3731

REDHEAD SEEKING LOVE
Jowteh female, seeks professional, creative, intellectual
male, 50-60, to explore all thet
life and London has to offer.
23.791

LIVELY AND ADVENTUROUS

TS:797
LIVELY AND ADVENTUROUS, Sim female, 45, enjoys travel, sports, cosy nights in, seeks Christian male, 40-65, who enjoys ite, for a lexiting relationship. Genuine callers only. TS:798
BRIGHT AND LIVELY
You will be 45-52, graduate, man of reason, sophisticated in some ways, lively, active intriqued by lots of trings. Me, slim female version of the shows. South Wales TS:755
LITTLE MISS RIPATIENT
Are you 684, lair, sim, lun-loving, independent, solvent, N/S, 35-407 Then this lair lemale, 33, 51", would like to hear from you! TS:752

In you like PMA COLADA?

In goting caught in the rain, you are probably an extection mix of personelity, contradiction and sensitivity. This warm, fively, NIS, brown-eyed girl, would like to meet you. Yorkshire. \$23759 CALLINGI

TSTO CALLING

Female, thoughtid, sometimes challenging, always optimistic and interesting to be with, anyon sycking, taking 2 my work, seaks male, 45-60, with positive, energetic outlook Nth Stropshire, NthWales, Sth Cheshire, TSTOTY ACTIVE LADY

Young 51, 5m, aftercive, NS, own home/carisuccessful business, loves arimals, travel, countryside, sunshine, is honest tectile, always smiling, from boy at heart, full of surprises, eecking smilar blue-leaned gentleman, under 54, NW. 253777

WARTICKSHIRE LADY
Tast, blonds temale, loves cuddles and baying heapty, sensitive male, 50s, to relate to and have fun with 253722

THINKING PARTINER
Creative and well-educated, proteasional temate, loves music, poetry and theatre, seeks confident, articutate male, 40+, to share diffection. Bath/Bristol area. TSTRS

BRING ME SUNSHINE
Creative, intelligent, with, silly, young woman, 30, seeks similar, atmactive male, 25-35. A certain degree of empetity with pigeons and the ability to deric Managements approved.

certain degree of empetity with pigeons and the ability to do bent Morecambe's paper bag trick preferred! \$2.763.

1880s FEMALE
Blonde and attractive, in good condition, but in need of further care and attention, into good tood, wine and walks on the beach; see's caring male, 30-40. South West area. \$2.7782.

TRAVELLER RETURNS
Attractive. skm, brunette Attractive, stam, brunette lamate, 29, enjoys staing, div-ling, socialising, pube, cinema, romantic dinners, seeks hand-some, professional, outgoing, affectionate male, 35, 57*, for friendship, possible relation-ship. London/S Coast area. 23735

ANY SINGLES LEFT?
Female, 29, odd one out amongst couples, seeks genuine, outgoing bloke, N/S, for friendship/romance. Staffs 223758 HAPPY & NON-MATERIALISTIC
Lovely, theraby, gentie, energetic, tall, meaure female, 48, seeks tall make, for relationship.

STILL SEARCHING
Elegant, furny, adventurous, well-travelled, postgraduate female, 32, likes walking in conversation, good lood/wire, seeking tall, professional male, 30+.

tall, professional male, 30+. 25:3797

ESSEX AND SUFFOLK
Cutwardly confident, inwardly
sity, no attachments, seeks
30ch male, preferably tall, contident, affectionate, taught easfly, can be sophisticated, files
to travel, I six motorcycling,
diving, olives, beer, cats and
real fires. 25:3742

SEEKING WOMEN PEACEPUL RURAL HOME lectic London career. Successful but non-malerialis-

THE USUAL SUSPECT th west lady, for romance. DEFINITELY NO ANORAK DEFINITELY NO ANORAK Chamming, considerate male, young 45, with GSOH, not borning, seeks with GSOH, not borning, seeks with GSOH, not borning, seeks with GSOH, MATE WANTED Professional, black male, 49, varied interests, seeks sim, white, caring, honest ternale, 30-40, for friendality, possible relationship. London only, 274-200

biandship. Taracco
FOREVER FRIENDS
Fr male, 40s, from Famham,
feeling fabutously handsome
and well-oil, curious for all the
mysteries of life, seeks lenale,
30s-40s, to fulfil life in fabutous
places. Tarable

AVAILABLE NOW
Professional, fit, presentable,
articulate, sociable mole, 46,
seeks special lady, to share
life's finer moments. Aberdeen/
Perth, Taratray

ANIMAL LOVER
Solvent male, 45, 5°10°, brown
halt, blue eyes, simmedium
hald, smart appearance, NS,
seeks petite, interesting lady,
37-45, with GSOH, who can
give and receive loads of affechon. East Angle, Taratry

Dark male writer, 31, 5°11°,
seeks lind temple, 25-35, with
GSOH, who doesn't want to be
alone anymore, just like me.
London, Taratry

ATTENTION WOMEN

Your ideal men to (a) bull, (b)
humorous, (c) serty 30s, (d)
professional, (e) attractive, or
(f) all of the above, if your
answer is (f), prease call.
London based, Taratry

Warm, Am, catgoring, OK-lookling male, 37, 6°, odectic tastes, Warm, tun, outgoing, OK-look-ing male, 37, 6', edectic tastes,

PROFESSIONAL GENT Tall. fit, silm, GSOH, seeks intelligent, slimish lady, up to 50, MS, living within 1 hour of S Buds, for tan, laughter and hierdehin. \$74200

friendship. 1214202 FOREVER FRIENDS

arts, cycling, walking, mearly vegetarian etc. seeks similar female, for friendship/relation-ship. London area. 15/4199

EXECUTIVE
WITH REAL EMOTION
Sincare, upmarket, handsome male, 37, 6°, dank hair, seeks reciprocally affectionate, emoionally open, sim, tat, elegant, tatally attractive lemale, 25-37, no ties, for deep, meaningful relationship. Manchester/NW area. 12/4191

MY FAVOURITE
PLACE IS INDONESIA
Amusing, 38, professional

Attractive, sim, prolessional male, 29, 5°11", quiet, eesygoing disposition, enjoys sports, art & craft, nights in, cinema, seeks genuine, silm, good-looking female, 20-26, for thendship, possible relationship. 273995 Amusing, 38, professional male, 91", loves travel, photography, music, seeks ethractive ady companion, for all file's travels. 274204 ship. 22:3995 WORCESTERSHIRE MALE Professional male, 29, seeking slim, French-speaking girl, 18-35, for fun times, possible reta-tionalists. <u>onship.</u> 223956 Our friendly operators are waiting to help you meet that special someone!

INVETERATE TRAVELLER Attractive, eclecic, professional male, 29, GSOH, seeks fre-spirited, intelligent temale, for relationship. 774008 INDEPENDENT READER Protessional, silm male, 36, 6°, seeks single female, 30-40, who is interested in films, masic, aris, for possible relationship. S or W Yorkshire.

ng, seeks fem

GSOH ESSENTIAL GSOPI ESSENTIAL Humorous male, 6', with werm heart and cold feet, seaking 20-something, professional lady, with direction, but sense of fun. 123996 HORTH OF THE BORDER Rigic, handsome, humorous, Popel male, 31, 510°, seeks attractive, tively lennale, 25-35, who enjoys tiving the to the full. Eigh area. 274004

GLAMOROUS

LADY SOUGHT

Extremely good-looking, sporty, professional sentiemen, 30sh, 51," muscular build, with VGSOH, into theatre, societising, horse riding, genuinely seeks good-looking, cider woman, preferably solvent, for tun and finendship, 274-147

GENERIE AND SPORTY

Fun-loving, fit, active, thendly, romartic mate, mature 18, 55, N/S, GSOH, enjoys playing loothall, gym, conversation, dining out, seeks fun-loving, sporty temale, 18-25, GSOH, for laughter, fun nights out, friendship possibily more.

Ex-162.

GET IN TOLICH nus twnf in the MANING Cutgoing, tun-loying, protes-sional male, 32, 61°, cuddly build, GSCH, enjoys cinema, countryside, travel, history, pol-lics, seeks female, 25-45, for friendship, possible relation-ship, Huddersfield area. LATIN MALE

Che-in-a-milion, sincere, honest, inteligent, warm, loving,
generous, latinful puy, 33,
seeks similar fermale, 20-35, for
relationship and best friend.
South West besed. "2400"

NICHOLSON BAKER FAN
Male, early 30s, big Nicholson
Baker fan, especially "Vox",
soeks similar fernale, for fively,
interesting conversation, friendship, possible relationship.
Lancs. #53951.

GET IN TOUCH London male, 19, GSOH, great hend to have, sueks female, for km and friendship. 12:4201 GREAT EXPECTATIONS GREAT EXPECTATIONS
Attractive, dark male graduate.
23, seeking a silm, intelligent
female, for fun, Iriendship and
romance. North East. 274192
CALL ME!
Sensitive male graduate, 28,
seeks lond, caring female, NS,
for tun, triendship, romance.
Leicestershire arree. 474142
YOUNG MAN!
Loving male, 30, seeks carino

Loving male, 30, seeks caring female, 20-30, to share nights out, cinema and great times. London. \$24166

YOUNGSTER
Male, 30, with a passion for flying. Van Momson, France,
mountains, Rioja and huge,
mountains, Rioja and huge,
mountains, Rioja and huge,
toxing forward to falling in love
with a feistly female Amster.

Detertainmentance #41.54 Pristolarnywhere. 174154
TAKE ME AWAY
TAKE ME AWAY
Fit barrister, 30, with romantic
flusions, seeks slim, interesting
lemale, for a long sentence.
Bedfordshire. 274175

HANDSOME
Tall, kun, upper-class chap, 39, seeks seriously beautiful, sim femele, 20s. with stunning personality and looks to match.
224158 IDEAL PARTNER

Male, 36, seeks you. SW area. 27:3988
SMOKING LADY SOUGHT Tall male, 36, likes music, pubs, horse-racing, country/coastal walks, Alan Partidge, John Shuttleworth, seeks lemale smoker, 28-40, for possible romance. S London. 27:3981
SEEKING ADVENTURE Tall, slim, fair, with, unconventional, if professional, 36, likes jazz, skimg, theatre, tennis, travel, seeks lively, intelligent. Christian temale, 20-30, for adventure, romance and commitment. West London. 27:3977
BRISTOL MALE Caring, honset, loving male, 38, 5°10", medium build, likes most things, seeks special female, to share good times with. South East. 274164

CREATIVE PROFESSIONAL CREATIVE PROFESSIONAL
Good-looking, spontaneous
mate, 39, seeks younger,
attractive female/kindred spirit.
West Miclands, 274188
NICE GUY
Sim and attractive, late 30s,
brown hair, blue eyes, seeks
female, with own interests and
ideas, for tun and romance.
London, 274181
PROFESSIONAL

milment. West London.
17:3977

BRISTOL MALE
Relaxed, easygoing, fit, soivent, professional male, 36,
82°, blond/blue, N/S, enjoys
the benefits of the city and the
loys of the countryside, seeks
like-minded female, similar
age, for triendship/relationship.
17:3958

CREATIVE CHAP
Mid-30s, GSOH, attractive,
graduate, fiction writer, seeks
beautiful, brainy, balanced,
lemale, 27:35, for meaningful
relationship. Hents/Cambs/N
London, 37:4006

CLASSICAL OFFER
Tall, caring, classical music
journalist, young 38, seeks lively, Intelligent temale, 20s, for
concerts, opera and romance.
London area, 17:3959

KINDRED SPIRIT
Funny, slightly bohemian, poor London, 274181

PROFESSIONAL
AND EDUCATED
Sim, Christian male, youthful
40, own home, seeks fernale
companion, to stree Ble and
interests. Kent. 274170

WARTING FOR A REPLY
Professional male 46, enjoys
loreign travel, chemical, jezz,
countyside welking, eating out
seeks temale 35-45 with strillar
interests for friendship/
romance. 274166

NICE BUT DIM
Thoroughly good bloke, 35,

Thoroughly good bloke, 35, 511°, seeks top female, for lovely romance. Chelmsford. Funny, slightly bohemian, poor guy, 39, seeks (lifetime?) soul mais for film, food, walks, wine. GOOD-LOOKING
& GENRINE
Sood-looking, honest male, 28,
Res pubs, clubs, chema,

GREAT TIMES
GRAT TIMES
GROOT-looking, professional male, 30s, 510°, into travel, sports and current affairs, sports and current affairs, spoks attractive lenale, 20-38, for good times and more. S. East. 17:3353
BE MY PARTINER
Tail, sociable, solvent, essygong, professional, loyal, good-looking, London-based male, serioys life, laughter, pubs, restaurants, boating, seeks attractive, good-humored lady, to become his best friend and more. 27:3957 possible relationship. 123974
SINCERE MALE

BUGGLES
Video killed the radio ster, remember? Cynical, pessimistic, sardonic male, 40, seeks optimistic, attractive, patient tensés, for batance and relationship. Nationality unimportart, London area. 27:3972
ALL I WANT
FOR CHRISTIMAS
Outgoing, romantic male, 42, 510°. Itos reading, cinema, walks, real ale, archeology, seeks sincare, inteligent lady, 30-45, for relationship. 27:3968

TRAVEL
COMPANION WANTED
Female, 52, seeks famale travel
of companion, to share expense
of companion, to share expense
of companion, to share expense el companion, to share expenses, travelling through Portugal, in a camper van. Must be easy-going. 23367.

IT'S GOOD TO TALK
Professional male, 40+, enjoys music, travel, cinema, freatre, seeks female friends, 33+, for inendship, outlings, conversation. London. Will old callers picase call again. 273943

HOMANTIC MALE....43, 5111, alm, unpretentious, carling, sensitive and creative, graduate/professional, sesies constitive, silm female, for a cartingfloving relationship, NW and beyond. 253848

ENVIRONMENTALLY
FRIENDLY
Handsome, professional chap, 40, west London based, wide range of interests including travel and green issues, seeks attractive, antelligent lady, 50-60, with a zest for its. 273984

MEDOLE YOUTH

A Jappy mits of entertainment A happy mix of entertainment and home-loving male, 44, seeks any female, with similar interests, please reply. London

Male, late 40s, needs N/S, quest, home-loving, brainy girithend, not a mother, big sister, witel, who prefers in to out, witel, who preters in to out, enjoys sociology, allied sciences, i preter a logical realist, to a mansriic. SE London, Nith Kent. 273952

CARRING MALE
Attractive, young, sim, educated, unpretentious, sincere male, 46, 516°, brown eyes, enjoys chema, cycling, countyside, alternative therapies, seeks sim. NIS female soul mate, 34-44, for lasting relationship, London. 273754

DESIRABLE MALE

Almost Christmas and still no

T3971
PROFESSIONAL MALE
Tall, shm, professional male,
late 40s but young-at-heart,
with GSOH, enjoys music, environment, walking, latking,
motor bites, non-package travet, friends/relatives, seeks
easygoing femals, 35-45, for
friendship/relationship.
Midlands enp., 27397

SEEKING

WEST MIDLANDS MALE
Masculine but caring, professional male, 40s, leaen swimmer, music lover, arts enthusiast, seeks similar male, for development of non-scene interests, leading to a mutually committed relationship, 274160
LANCASMITE MALE
Stim, attractive, car pomarate Stim, attractive, gay romantic, 48, likes socialising and travel, seeks similar male, for conver-sation, triendship and hopefully more. 234171 LOOKING FOR LOVE LOUKING FUR LUVE
Gay guy, 26, 59°, sim, goodlooking, erloys chema, dining
out, pube, seeks special, tail,
handsome guy, 26-40, for committed
relationship. mitted relationship.
Southampton area, no time
wasters please. 27:3736
SEEKS SAMLAR

OLDER MAN OLDER MAN
Tall, silm, active, professional,
older Hampshire male, streight
acting with GSOH, seeks
younger male, 25-40, any race,
for theatre, cherna, holidays,
tunfriendship.

ALTERNATIVE LIFESTLYE COULD YOU BE MY BABE? Dark, arty, educated, entrepre-neurial, bissousi male, 31, 510°, GSOH, seeks temale, 25-35, for friendship, leading to 25-35, tor friendship, leading to 25-35, tor friendship. Don't

BUGGLES

Glamorous, intelligent, convi thematicned mete, 40-50, 6'+ for long-term friendship/rela-tionship. Likes include pubs, countryside, theatre, holidays etc. Knotts area, 274003 JUST FRIENDS

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LOVER
Male, 43, lover of art and classical music, especially music of
Mozart & Beethoven, seeks
similar female, for intendship/ Nortok area. 223734 SALISBURY ARTIST Male, would like to meet other local artists, 20s-40s, N/S, to

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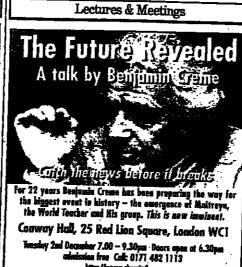
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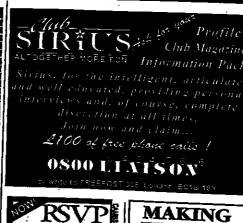
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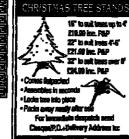


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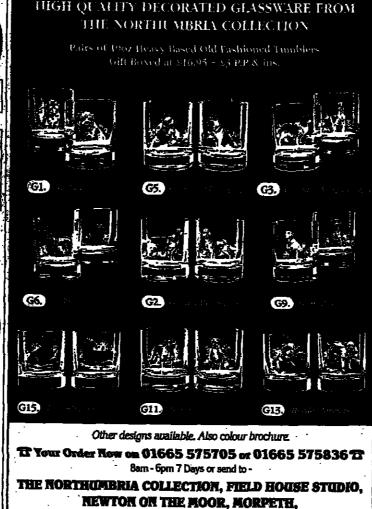
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Trench warfare in the heart of Essex

How do you make a feature out of a ditch? In her regular advice column Anna Payord comes to the rescue of the Cooper family.

We moved to this much smaller house 18 months ago, simply to gain a bigger garden. The garden is a strange shape, not very long, but extremely wide. Our longest houndary is a ditch about 4st deep. You could call it a stream if you felt ambitious. I have strong ideas for most of the garden, but the ditch stumps me. At the moment the banks are covered in about 80 per cent nettles. The other in her "ditch" plants, beavyweights that she side of the ditch is open farmland, with several mature trees.

I have considered a fairly wild and naturul look (minus the nettles), but I also like the thought of large-leaved plants such as gunnera and custor oil plants making a tunnel for the children to explore. My main concern is that the ditch dries up in the summer, and I have no idea what plants, if any, will stand being very wet all winter and dry all summer. I also feel that I may have to work in a small area at a time, replanting as soon as I have got rid of the nettles. In some places, where I have tried spraying off the nettles with glyphosate and digging them up, the stream banks have eroded. Can you give us some advice?

Eve Cooper, aged 36, moved last year with her husband, Paul, and their three boys to a brick-built cottage, the middle one of a terrace of three overlooking farmland in the flat, rich countryside near Saffron Walden in Essex. Their garden spreads wide behind all three cottages, bounded by the problematical ditch. There are about 63 yards of it, curving round the boundary. Ditches are made for a reason, and any planting would have to take account of the fact that the area might be submerged. My feeling, though, looking at the amount of leaf litter that had accumulated along the bottom of this ditch, was that it was much drier now than it had been in the years after it was made, at least a century ago.

Because the ditch represented the buffer zone between garden and land-

scape, the planting needed to be sympa-thetic to both - a kind of transition zone. It was impractical to garden the whole 63 yards intensively, but the area naturally fell into three different territories.

About halfway along the boundary, where it faced the back of the cottage, Ms Cooper had made a long flowerbed butting on to the ditch's top edge. The ditch behind could make a backdrop for the bed, filled with gardenesque plants such as gunnera, rheum with tall spires of rhubarb flowers, purplish-leaved eupatorium, filipendula, shaggy-flowered inula, and ligularies. A powerful physique is what she should look for can leave to slug it out for 10 rounds against resurgent nettles and other undergrowth.

The sections either side of this central zone could be wilder in style, planted with alder, elder, willow, dogwood and other plants to echo the mood set by the few remnants of native trees and shrubs. A willow and a big field maple grow there, both pollarded, and blackthorn, wild cherry and sycamore.

On the left-band side of the central area, where the ditch curves past the Coopers' newly planted orchard, I would thicken up the boundary on the far side of the ditch with trees such as the cut-leaf alder, Alnus incana 'Laciniata'. This survives manfully in areas that are both cold and wet. As the ditch follows the east boundary of the garden, more cover and shelter would be welcome in winter. The cut-leaf alder, with foliage deeply divided into toothed lobes, would meld imperceptibly with the true natives, but at the same time would have half its heart in the garden it faced.

More willows would work well along the far boundary, too, as much for the cheering sight of their winter twigs as their elegant summer foliage. I'd continue to pollard them, once they were big enough to take it. It is a traditional technique, and the bark on the new growth produced as a result of the cutting back has a much brighter colour than old wood. Salix alba 'Britzensis' is one of the best, with orange stems glowing deeper and richer as winter days get colder and bleaker.

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Ditch dilemma: the Coopers' garden is bounded by a trench that is wet in winter but dry in summer

Photograph: Andrew Bur

But how are the plants to be got into the ground, given the present thick blanket of nettle? And where exactly should they be planted? Not at the very bottom of the ditch. That should be left clear, for winter water (if it comes) and for Jo (11), Ben (eight) and Charlie (two) to take over if they want, in summer. One of the reasons the Coopers decided last year to move their family from their tidy house in Cambridge was to give them the kind of wild, free, country childhood that Eve Cooper had herself.

City-born Paul Cooper is not into gardening, but he had the inspirational idea of giving eight hours' worth of a man with a spade to his wife as a birthday present. The best present she's ever had, says Eve Cooper. She's the greatest digaholic I've ever encountered, and had already dug by hand the entire area where the fruit trees (another birthday present) are now planted.

But digging is not the answer in the steep-sided terrain of the ditch. On the far side, strimming round the existing trees would reveal enough of the lie of the land to plant alders and willows. If the Coopers planted standard trees, on 4-ft stems, their heads (trees', not Coopers') would already be above the danger zone.

On the nearside bank, the weedkiller glyphosate will eventually control the nettles, but the bank will erode if Eve Cooper then tries to pull out the roots. Easier to leave them be, dig out planting holes where they are needed and mulch the rest of the area with grass cuttings, or fairly coarse woodchip mulch, that won't slide immediately down the bank.

She's right in thinking she should tackle one patch at a time. This is how I gradually brought the bank in our garden under control, although it took me 12 years. The

weeds need to be properly killed before you plant and I found that not digging was the key. If you dig, you bring a whole new seedbank of weed to the surface. You also destabilise the soil. If the areas either side of the central area were treated as "wild" areas, then plantings of shrubs such as dogwoods, fancy-leaved elders and shrubby willows would be entirely appropriate.

It will probably take the whole of next year to get on top of the nettles but by this time next year, Ms Cooper could be plauting dogwoods such as Comus alba 'Elegantissima', the lovely, purplish-brownstemmed shrubby willow Salix hastata "Wehrhahnii" and the elegant elder Sambucus nigra laciniata. The willow has wonderful wootly white catkins; the elder has the wide, white flowerheads of the hedgerow elder, but leaves 100 times more handsome. While these areas are get-

ting established, Ms Cooper can be ing lists of plants for the grand slan tral area which should be lush, jung. composed mainly of plants with leaves. The biggest plants, such as gur should be planted towards the bottthe ditch; smaller ones, such as host: rodgersias, towards the top.

A trip to the canal garden at Beth to's home would give her an idea of is possible: huge-leaved hostas, rodg with leaves like enormous horse ches big, tough clumps of day lilies, Hemen flag irises and cabbagey clumps of the flowered Senecio smithii. Perhaps Cooper might arrange a visit for his next birthday present.

Beth Chatto Gardens, Elmstead M Colchester, Essex: open in winter, Mc 9am-4pm, admission £2.50.

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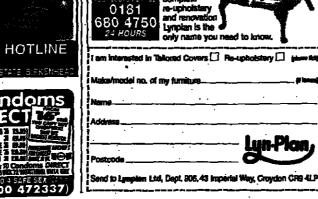
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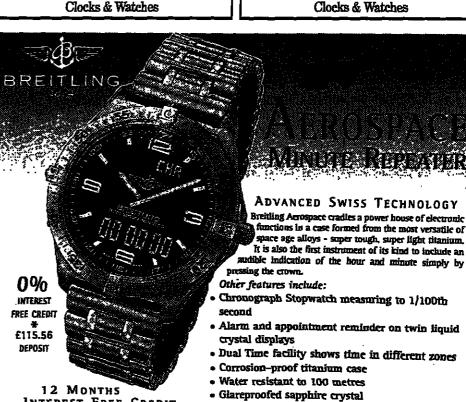
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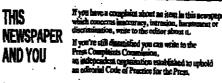
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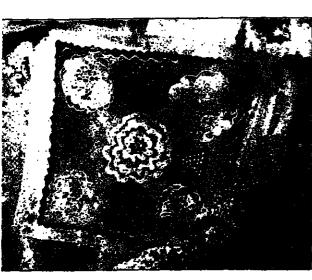
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rafty ways with silk

furnishings to clothes and wall ngs, silk painting is extremely tile. Sally Staples joins a course to how.

are 10 of us sitting around a large farmkitchen table tucking into a selection of tiche, salads, fruit and home-made cake atting away like old friends. The scenario vhat you might except in a conventional ngs set deep in the Wye valley.

ducation class. Although the pupils - all 1 on this particular course - have signed learn silk painting, they also have the to relax and make friends in homely surne are residential, using all the facili-



the converted old Edwardian coach as though it were home. Others, who cally, join the art centre's five-day for just a day or two. Anyone, says tutor sh, can enjoy learning the techniques painting. There is no need to be cretalented. There is no pressure to and there are plenty of laughs. try Self from Alcester has drawn a design

rate a silk tie for her son's Christmas L His name she admits coyly is Will. Will iomehow it is hard to imagine the Sus novelist wearing a silk tie designed

by Mummy. Hilary is used to the openmouthed reaction when she reveals her son's identity. Then after just the right pause she laughs and admits her Will is not the Will But she confesses they do have plenty of fun with other people's confusion.

She has set up her tie on a frame and is outlining the deign with a "gutta" which is similar to the masking fluid used in watercolour. Because Will has just moved house, she has designed the tie with dozens of tiny houses becoming progressively smaller as the tie narrows. Once the outlining is complete, she can colour them with water-based paint and once dry they are fixed by ironing.

Care worker Rachel Perryman, aged 25, who is between jobs, is working faster than any of the others and she has chosen to tackle a

large rectangular piece of silk which she will turn into a scarf, or possibly a wall hanging. The silk is stretched across a frame to keep it in place and Rachel has outlined a selection of leaves entertained with flowers and butterflies. Now she is baving fun with a selection of rich colours, mixing greens and blues and reds and progressing at great speed.

"I did art A-level and my mother has done a bit of silk painting so I thought I'd have a go. The course is brilliant and Liz gives us some useful tips

to create special effects." One of these is to dampen the silk, paint it with your chosen colours and then sprinkle salt over the pattern while still wet. When the paint has dried the salt can be shaken off and leaves behind a mottled effect.

Brenda Clough, from North Somerset, has chosen to paint an autumn scene on her piece of silk, and the skill with which she produces slender leaves and twirling vines indicates that she is not a beginner. Brenda has worked with watercolours before and admits this helps with silk painting.

Also on the course is a granddaughter and granny team who have never tried silk painting before. Nine Staniford, 23, a website designer who lives locally, persuaded her granny Dorothy to visit the arts centre and try one of the courses. Dorothy, on boliday from Cheshire, is delighted with what she has achieved in such a short time.

She bought some padded silk spectacle cases from tutor Liz and has painted them with floral scenes. "I'm not much of an artist but I copied some pictures of flowers and I don't think they've come out too badly," she said. Nina has painted a variety of design on silk bowties as Christmas presents and is now working on a large scarf decorated with flowers and leaves. She has cut out the flower shapes, pinned them to the silk and then outlined them with the gutta before chosing what colours to

Liz emphasises to her students that any mistakes made on the silk are not reasons to panic. "Use your mistakes," she charges her pupils. "You can often turn them into something quite interesting. I use water-based solvent free paints and I bring a selection on the course so that students can buy what they need if they are beginners. There is so much on the market that it does help to get some guidance on

Meanwhile, the informality of the Wye Valley Arts Centre makes it very popular. Director Valerie Welham tells the story of one young student who felt so at home that, feeling a little peckish, he popped down to the kitchen in the early hours of the morning and devoured half the chicken casserole that had been made for the following day's lunch.

A five-day silk-painting course for residential stu-dents at the Wye Valley Arts Centre Centre costs £280 which includes full board and tuiton fees. For further information on this and other courses contact Valerie Welham at The Old Coach House, Mork, St Briavel's, Lydney, Gloucestershire GL15 6QH (01291 689463 or 01595 530214; website: www.wyeart.mcmail.com or e-mail: wyseart@mcmail.com). Liz Nash can offer further advice on silk painting (01794 301217) and also teaches evening classes at Romsey School, Greatbridge, Romsey, Hants (01794



Special effects: Liz Nash's silk-painting course is creative, fun and sociable

Photographs: Christopher Jones

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April of section and section

AMES

NN O'BEIRNE RANELAGH N'T JUNK IT – USE IT

ek, we are going to do some origami square shape, with a triangle on top. o make it easier, we shall not be ing with those tiresome diagrams that raper-folding so cumbersome. t with a square of paper with sides of lin long. Now, to make the tions easier to follow, mark the A, B, C and D (in that order), the ints of the sides E, F, G and H (with een A and B. F between B and C id the centre O. (Find the centre by in half and unfolding, first side to en top to bottom.) Copy the letters he back, in case you lose them. old B and D to meet in the centre, O. rease the line AO backwards. ow comes the difficult bit: bring A o C, folding on the crease that you st made to bring H, E and F er. You should now have a flat

4. Turn your attention to the corner where A and C meet, and fold the small triangular portion (including the A corner) up inside the pocket above it. A should now be tucked up with B, D and O.

5. Fold up C into the same pocket to lock the previous flap in place. You are now left with a triangular pocket, with a smaller triangle surmounting it.

6. Fold the top triangle not quite all the way into the top pocket, leaving it sticking out by a few millimetres.

7. Turn the paper over, and that's it. Oh, you want to know what it is, do you? Well I'll tell you. What you have made is a neat little bookmark with a tab. Carry it with you at all times, slip it over the corner of the page when you stop reading, and dog-eared books will be a thing of the past.

CLUEDO WILLIAM HARTSTON

It was the chap with the silly name, in the hotel near Windsor, with the 8ft piece of lead piping. Or it might have been the PR chap from Waddingtons, with the mobile phone, in the bar.

Today, at the Oakley Court Hotel near Windsor, Britain's first official Cluedo Convention is taking place to raise money for the charity Children With Leukemia. They began yesterday, with playlets, unusual identification parades and odd challenges as well as normal Cluedo games, all to determine who wins the first prize of a murder mystery

Orient Express. Cluedo, for anyone who does not know it, is a board game of logical deduction. It starts with a man, Dr Black,

trip on the Venice Simplon

having been murdered. Cards indicate who killed him, in what room, and with which weapon, are hidden in an envelope. The other cards are distributed among the players who may gain information by asking questions of each other in turn, while moving their pieces, according to dice throws, round a flat-plan of the mansion in which the

murder took place. Invented by Anthony Pratt, a Leeds solicitor's clerk, in 1946, Cluedo has now sold well over 100 million sets around the world. It has also inspired a film and a television series. The present event, however, is the first to offer bonus points to any entrant who shares a name with any of the Cluedo characters. My money's on Colonel Mustard.

PANDORA MELLY GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

James Dyson, 50, inventor and manufacturer of the Dyson bagless vacuum deaner

I play Monopoly, but without much enjoyment. It's a bit tedious going round the board and acquiring things. More fun when everybody's going bankrupt and you start borrowing money or negotiating properties with people in lieu of rent. When you're doing something with another person, it stops being a matter of luck. I'd like to get straight into that, and forgo throwing the dice and moving round the board.

I think Monopoly is a game you play in your late teens and early twenties, and it always mirrors later life in some way. There are people who haven't looked at the long term. They accumulate, then run out of cash because they haven't bought any buildings, and they land on people who've mortgaged themselves to the hilt to build hotels.

Some people like trains and always buy the stations, but they're just being romantic, because it's an hotel on the red or yellow squares which will crucify the other players.

I've always thought it's a mistake to buy Mayfair and Park Lane because they're frightfully expensive and you've only got two to land on. Whereas if you've blocked off a corner with the red and orange sets, people will land on you every single time.

That's the fun of it for me: getting the strategy right and thinking for the long term. I've always done that, and I'll mortgage myself to the hilt in order to get something valuable. The stations will get you a little money in the short term, but the winners are

always the people with the swanky hotels. In a way, I dread playing. I have to make investments and negotiate with people in my everyday life. In the evenings, the last thing I want is a kind of repetition with Monopoly.

Loose Monopoly money may be swept up with a Dyson bagless vacuum cleaner. Read all about it, and its inventor, in James Dyson's "Against the Odds" (Orion Books, £18.99).

SS: WILLIAM HARTSTON

an you tell a human rom a computer? Alan Turing proposed ious "Turing Test" for te intelligence his ts were clearly on too d a plane to encompass a of people cheating in simultaneous display. dea was to have an nenter asking questions respondents, one , one machine. If the

ter can be programmed its responses cannot be uished from the s, then, by Turing's one has to admit that chine is intelligent. hat if the experimenter vorld chess champion, duestions take the f moves played in a of chess games? It is icult to devise a set of as that will discriminate n computers and s, but if the champion's y objective is to win the then discrimination es more difficult. hat was it that made

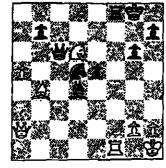
empeting against him e Internet in a neous display a couple cs ago was using a i ter to help select its Black's excellent g play – and the i se of a computer beside urd (necessary for the t connection) - may 2 sen enough to alert : ov's suspicions. The ss with which they then

Casparov think that a

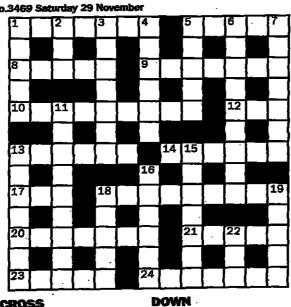
threaded their way through complex tactics seemed to confirm it. Finally, 29...Rf8! was too much for him. After 30.Rxf8+ Kxf8 White has no good discovered check with his knight, because the threat of Qc1+ is hanging over him.

So Kasparov refused to continue the game. The captain of the Internet team has strongly denied all charges, pointing out that the players were being watched all the time. I don't know who is right. See what you think:

White: Garry Kasparov Black: Internet Chess Club 1 d4 Nf6 16 Ng5 e3 2 c4 g6 17 cxd6 cxd6 3 Nc3 Bg7 18 fxe3 Bh6 4 e4 d6 19 Rxf8+ Qxf8 5 Be2 0-0 20 Ne4 Bxe3+ 6 Nf3 e5 21 Kh1 Nf5 70-0 Nc6 22 Ra3 Bd4 8 d5 Ne7 23 Qd2 Qd8 9 b4 a5 24 Bg4 Ne7 10 Ba3 axb4 25 Bxc8 Qxc8 11 Bxb4 Nd7 26 Nxd6 Qd7 12 a4 f5 27 Rf3 Nxd5 13 a5 Nf6 28 Qa2 Qc6 14 c5 Nxe4 29 Rf1 Rf8 15 Nxc4 fxc4



CONCISE CROSSWORD



ACROSS With one's king under attack (2,5) Avoids (5) Eagle's nest (5) Kenyan port (7)

10 Infectious disease (9) 12 Bird of prey (3) 13 Digs (6) 14 Small fish (6) 17 Enemy (3) 18 Yield (9) Cuisine (7) 21 Front part of stage (5)

23 Subject to ebbs and flows 24 Worthy of remark (7)

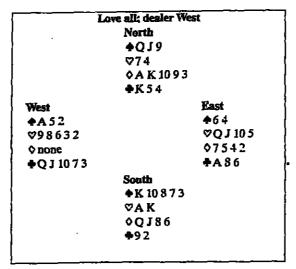
Ancient British tribe (5) Vehicle (3) Carry out (7) Japanese robe (6) Latin American dance

Not deep (7) Lie (9) 13 Shortfall (7) 15 Imprecise (7) 16 Coloured pencil (6) 18 Charm (5) 19 Area for shooting prac-

tice (5) 22 Bone (3) Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Harts, 4 Topping (Heartstopping), 8 Lampoon, 9 Niece, 10 Inner, 11 Related, 13 Gien, 15 Guinea, 17 Voyage, 20 Stye, 22 Replete, 24 David, 26 Great, 27 Popular, 28 Deserve, 29 Suede, DOWN: 1 Helping, 2 Roman, 3 Scourge, 4 Tenure, 5 Panel, 6 Inertia, 7 Greed, 12 Ervy, 14 Last, 16 Impress, 18 Oedipus, 19 Endorse, 21 Temple, 22 Rigid 23 Enter, 25 Value Rigid, 23 Enter, 25 Value.

BRIDGE: ALAN HIRON



West had a very clear idea as to how the defence should go on this deal, but unfortunately his partner was not on the same wavelength. Could he have made matters easier for East?

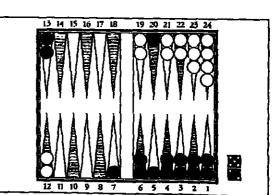
After a pass by West, North opened One Diamond, South responded One Spade, and now West came to life with Two Diamonds - a Michaels cue-bid, suggesting length in the unbid suits. North doubled - not because he expected his opponents to play there, but conventionally showing three-card support for spades. East passed, and South's jump to Four Spades ended the auction. (A save in Five Hearts by East-West would have cost only 100 points.)

West led ♣Q against Four Spades and was allowed to hold the trick. He realised that the defenders could come to at most two club tricks and he continued with \$3 to East's ace and awaited a diamond return.

He is still waiting, for East switched to the queen of hearts. East never got in again, and South was soon able to

You might argue that the three of clubs was a clear suit preference signal, but West had a more direct way of clarifying the position. Suppose he switches to ♥9 at trick two. This makes it clear that he has nothing of value in the heart suit, and later, when he gets in with the ace of trumps, his second club lead will be sure to attract the right

BACKGAMMON: CHRIS BRAY



This was a difficult decision which faced Wendy Kaplan in the final of the Illinois State Championship. At double match point Wendy - who remains the only woman ever to have won the World Championship has a 52 to play.

As she is trailing in the race by 62 pips to 90, the running play 20/13 can quickly be discounted. There are three real choices: (a) 13/8, 13/11; (b) 13/8, 7/5; (c) 7/5, 6/1. All three plays have their merits. Play (a) keeps contact without damaging the home board; play (b) constructs a closed home board making any hit by Black a game winner, but leaves White a direct shot: play (c) maintains maximum contact at the cost of a weakening of the home board.

In the game, Wendy made the bold choice of 13/8, 7/5. Her opponent rolled 43 which he played 6/2, 6/3. On her next roll Wendy had to move her remaining . man from her mid-point. White then rolled 51, played 13/7. Wendy rolled 62, hitting both blots with 20/18*/12*, and easily won the game.

Wendy had made a bold play under pressure and reaped her due reward. The ability to play well under extreme pressure is the hallmark of a good player. And what of her choice of move?

Extensive roll-outs show that the best move is play (c), albeit not by much. The key thing for Black in this position is to hit a shot, and she should play the move that optimises her chances of a shot on the next roll. The slight damage to the home board is not as important as generating that possible shot. A good lesson in weighing the importance of different elements of a position.

مكذا من الاحل

Wind power to put you in a spin

Fancy being pulled along at 50mph, 18in from the ground, by a mad kite with a will of its own? Try parakarting. Eric Kendall checks it out.

As you hurtle across a field, with mud flying, the ground rushes by just inches beneath you as the wind powers your buggy with extraordinary force. Parakarting - being towed in a three-wheel buggy by a power kite - is fast, exhilarating and demanding. Pull the wrong string and you'll be wearing the scenery.

It all seems so unlikely. Kites used to be nice, approachable, easy-going types of things. But, like Rottweilers, some have more bite than others. What's really impressive when you first get on the comnercial end of a power kite is that with one sharp pull on the lines, the thing leaps from the ground and pulls even more sharply back, at wind speeds that don't even ruffle your feathers. There's something going on that doesn't quite meet the eye; no wonder someone decided they'd be good for locomotion.

The trick is that once "inflated" by the breeze, power kites form an aerofoil shape - the same profile as a plane's wing. Without a fuselage, luggage, 300 people and the duty free, these particular wings have only themselves to lift, which they do with abandon, dragging you for a ride. Once you get on wheels, you can stop struggling and start having fun.

In fact, there's a bit more to it than that. Just flying these four-line kites is a challenge that you have to combine with controlling the kart by footwork alone. It's a it like trying to pat your head and rub your tummy simultaneously.

The way to learn is in two stages: flying the kite while on your feet, mimicking the control and the moves required when karting, and then learning to steer the kart itself, without a kite - like go-karting, only more grown-up. Put the two skills together and you get pulled flat on your face, but that's only the start.

Though the complexity of a four-line kite is daunting, it gives the greatest potential for control and for avoiding involuntarily kart exits. In the right hands it's a highly manoeuvrable, precise bit of gear. In the wrong hands the possibilities are endless: it can vary from damp squib to shoulder-wrenching mad thing in the blink of an eye, and can drag a would-be kite flier across a beach at astonishing speed, leaving impressive furrows big enough for small children to play in.



Let's go fly a kite: but this time, attach it to a kart and try to fly it and manoeuvre as you career along in your 'wind window'

Photograph: Peter Grant

The lines are arranged with the two on the left leading from one handle and the two on the right from the other. The handles allow pressure to be applied to each line individually, so that the kite can be spun, turned, accelerated and braked by means of cunning movements that are even harder to do than they would be to describe.

Learning to use the "wind window", the roughly triangular area (downwind of the kite flier) in which it's possible to fly the kite, is the other major factor in kite control; a good feel for the window gives optimum scope for manoeuvring once on

The karts are as simple as the kites are complex. The front wheel has foot pegs sticking out from either side, by which the

wheel can be turned to steer the kart. The two back wheels are spread wide apart and to the rear of the bucket seat in which you

The whole set-up is so low-slung that its handling is phenomenal, and a brisk turn of the front wheel at speed will spin the kart to a halt rather than tipping it - to do that, you need to add the pull of the kite in the wrong direction.

Putting the two together for the first time is the hardest part. With your kite flying, you have to jump into your kart, but a gust at the wrong moment can have you 10 yards downwind of it before you know what's happened. Once aboard, with a steady wind and a wide open expanse to aim across, you're away.

The sensation of speed, about 18 inch-

es from the ground, is phenomenal. Exciting it may be, but until you master cornering and stopping, it's full steam ahead. As in all the best sports, there are no brakes, but in this case the "accelerator" is also jammed in the "on" position: all that talk of 50mph with the wind behind you is starting to look conservative.

Where and how to learn

Parakarting is very new. The UK now has a grand total of nine Parakart Association (PKA) approved instructors who can offer training courses and advice on buying equipment.

A basic set up includes: buggy (£199 upwards), 3-4 metre power kite (£200 upwards), harness (£45), protective pads, helmet and goggles. Waterproof clothing is useful. The minimum viable area for karting is about the size of two football pitches. Beaches and large playing fields are ideal, preferably free of other users.

Anyone with reasonable co-ordination parakart. Kite size can be tailor user weight and strength. Once you are beyond the novice stage, a harness is used into which the kite is clipped for power transmission, reducing stress on the arms and upper body.

This is a good idea, with an official speed record of 54mph, and over 60mph claimed

Just trundling round in circles for the fun of it is enough for many, but there is also an aggressive racing scene (competitively trundling round in circles for the fun of it) in which Brits excel.

Parakart Association: send sae to Javne Suckling, 31 Oakdale, Crown Wood, Bracknell, Berks RG12 0TG;

Ben or Dante at The London Beach р, готюрено коад (U1/1-243 2/72): Dominic at UFO Active Leisure, Westonsuper-Mare (01934 644988);

Cunning Stunts (01722 410588) offers the UK's most comprehensive training set-up, with three instructors based in Salisbury. Their one-day, all-inclusive starter courses cost £40, and wind permitting should have you successfully performing the basics by the end of the day. The first three readers to write to them at 45-47 Fisherton Street, Salisbury, Wilts SP2 7SU, will receive a free training course at their Salisbury base on 8 February 1998.

Coming to grips with the Nether region

Two hundred years ago this month, Coleridge walked the Quantock hills and contemplated the 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner'. Cive Fewins followed in his footsteps.

Autumn mist meant that we were not quite able to see the nuclear power station at Hinckley Point on Bridgwater Bay from our vantage point on top of Somerset's Quantock Hills. So our view across the heather- and bracken-clad hills towards the bay and distant Wales must have been much the same as it was in Coleridge's day, two centuries ago.

The poet and his young wife Sara and baby son Hartley came to live in the small town of Nether Stowey at the foot of the hills in January 1797. They were foilowed seven months later by their friends William and Dorothy Wordsworth, who took a year's lease on Alfoxton House, a large, early-18th-century property two miles away, near the village of Holford. The two poets used to walk the hills together, and our aim was to retrace some of the tracks they used.

It is a particularly appropriate walk this month, as it was in November 200 years ago while walking in these hills that the two discussed The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. It was published in 1798.

We drove from the centre of Nether Stowey, following the sign to Crowcombe. After two miles we parked the car at Dead Woman's Ditch, so called because of the body of a woman traveller found near the spot in medieval times. From there we took an unsigned track on the other side of the road from the car park, and walked for just under a mile to the main track that follows the Quantock Ridge. We followed the ridge path for about a mile and a half. The autumn mist had ifted sufficiently for us to have splendid views over the monitating countryside to the west. After about a mile we reached Bicknoller Post. This old oak post marks he site of a building where carriages stopped to change torses on the coach road from Holford to the small own of Williton, five miles to the west. Tracks shoot ant here in all directions. Beware, the Quantocks are argely unsignposted; we were grateful that we had rought a large-scale Ordnance Survey map so that ve could identify the various points mentioned in the ntroduction to my collection of Coleridge's poems.

Bicknoller post is only 200 yards or so from an anient track known as the Great Road. Once we reached his clearly defined former packhorse track we arned right, following the stony route for just under mile. Eventually we followed it gently downhill to nother meeting-point of numerous old tracks. It was larked on the map as New Ground.

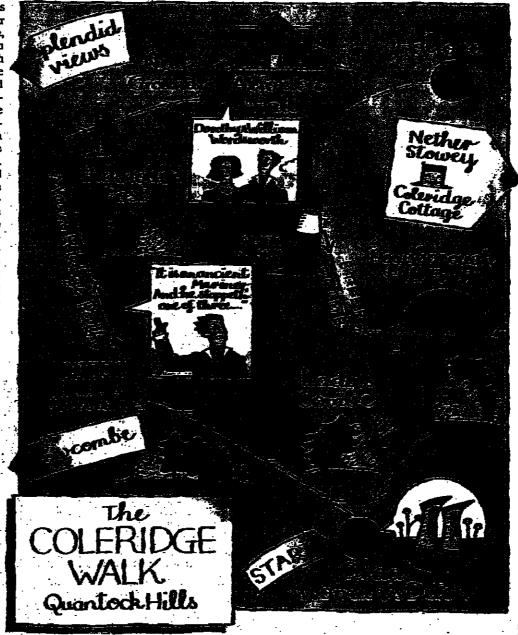
Here we left the Great Road and walked through Alfoxton Park to see the house where the Wordsworths once lived. Our route led us steeply down past the rear of the building, now a hotel. Once past the big house, we were tempted to take the main driveway down through the woods to Holford village and the Plough pub. But, realising we had missed hinchtime there, we decided to keep walking and took a footpath signposted "Holford via Dog Pound" that led to a field of closecropped grass which we crossed diagonally to a stile in the far corner. We then descended about a quarter of a mile through woods of beech and holly to join a bridle track. Very shortly we emerged beside a large green, a quarter of a mile or so from Holford village.

We walked along until we found an old-fashioned Somerset County Council sign which pointed us in the direction of Holford Combe. The road led past a newly thatched cottage and the attractive-looking Combe House Hotel Despite a large sign saying "Open to Non Residents" and an enticing-looking menu, we resisted the temptation to take an early tea and plodded up the combe, until the valley widened and we found ourselves in a large, flat, green area traversed by a shallow, gurgling brook. We took a quick break to eat the picnic we had brought with us, then carried straight on over a ford where the metalled road came to an end. The track ran beside the stream up the steep

As the gradient steepened we looked carefully for our escape route, a short path to the left about a mile up the combe from Holford. This brought us into Lady's Combe - clearly marked on the 1:25,000 map. A steep climb of about a third of a mile led us to a clearing at the foot of Dowsborough Hill fort.

The path ascending the steep gradient to the hill fort, an Iron Age camp, lay to our left. We took the path in the other direction to join the minor road that climbs gently through the woods for less than a quarter of a mile to join the Nether Stowey-Crowcombe road opposite Dead Woman's Ditch. We drove back to Nether Stowey. We were unable to visit Coleridge Cottage, where the poet and his family lived from 1797 to 1800, since it was closed for the winter. But we had a large tea at Stowey Tea Rooms in Castle Street.

Length of walk: About seven miles Map: 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey Explorer 2 Three leaflets describing walks in the area and the Coleridge and Wordsworth connections are available from the Curator, Coleridge Cottage, Nether Stowey, Somerset TA5 INQ, price 40p each. Send an A5 stamped, addressed envelope.



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RECYCLED

Westbourne Grove: a call from Björk

From the shops of Queensway, past cheap Indian restaurants, designer furnishers, rundown grocers, video stores - through the nightmare, five-way Chepstow Corner where the buses terrify the bravest cyclist. This is Westbourne Grove, where poverty and wealth exist side by side as nowhere else in

I pedal past Madonna's favourite jewellers, the Antony Worrall Thompson restaurant and a sudden clutch of antique shops, to the very centre, where eccentricity crowds upon chi-chi health club, where the ultimate designer caff overlooks prizewinning public toilets - the very point where, each year the Carnival parade is judged. Where else would you expect to pass by Bjork, surely the oddest woman in town?

I push on towards Portobello, and the realisation comes only when I've cycled a few yards past. She sits alone on a bench outside the pub, mobile clamped to her ear, a bizarre collage of unrelated garments and the earnest, squeaky sound of her voice in what I assume is Icelandic, and, even judging from that tiny snippet, was evidently of

some importance or concern. What could possibly be of concern to this strange lady? It must be the pursuit of some creative endeavour, a new venture into realms of music, sexuality and art with which to bemuse and fascinate her public. Or maybe it is a recalcitrant boyfriend,

some pushy impresario. The Grove: poverty and wealth, design and eccentricity, glam and Christianity; elegant beauties, down-and-out beasts. This tiny woman, multicultural, arty and intense, evident wealth in Oxfam clothes, personifies

Pedal along the Grove any day of the week, and you will find it's London's passeggiata. This is a wonderful, brave, spirited area, and Björk is perhaps its definitive in-

Peter Reynolds

1.50 MITSUBISH) MOBILE PHONES LONG DISTANCE HURDLE (Grade 2) (CLASS A) E19,000 added 3th 110 Me Penghi Veloc Cl 2 140
SET-P PLEASURE SHARED (159) (D) (Boy Eases) P Hobbs 9 11 7
22FT-3 GAROLO (FR) (17) (Lady Lloyd Webber) C Brooks 7 ti 4M A Fitzgerald B
Place blue, crange from company N Twiston Carles 5 11 2
3272- ANGELO'S DOUBLE (284) (8F) (J Harwood) R Bucker 8 11 0 A Maguire
Marker Adapt State and Adapt J. Jollarson 6 11 0E Collegian
William and exception and the Marya Duckerty May P Duckerty 7 11 0P Holley
Grant Indiana (Indiana) Jackson Bloodstock C British 4 to 13 G Buildey
Gray, emergid green demand and cap
- 6 Obclered - - 8 Obclered - e, 10-1 Garolo, 12-7 Angele's Double, 22-7 Spring Macathon Starred, 7-1 Raisagh Na- 95 Work & Confess & The Confess of the Con
SUBMINITION OF A DISTRICT (NEW MOUTH)))))))))
istinguett's only previous attennet of the television because of end of the file

Missinguett's only previous attempt at the trp was when brushed aside by Prichwell in a metch run at a moderate pace at Wetherby. She may not have the necessary stamina in this ground and GO-INFORMAL can capitalise on his good second to House Capitalin over the course and distance to days spo. Although that was only a handcap, it was not a good pace and it was a fine effort considering Go-Informal had been off the course for 19 months. He was a smart novice in the 1995-6 season, staying on strongly to split United and Karshi in the Sun Alliance Novices' Hurdia, and it looks as if he has retained all of that ability.

Selection: GO-INFORMAL

	HENNERGY OCCUPA COLD COLD COLD COLD COLD COLD COLD COLD	
<u> </u>	HENNESSY COGNAC GOLD CUP HANDICAPTED C1	
	CHASE (Grade 3) (CLASS A) £70,000 added BBC1	
	3m 2f 110yds Penalty Value £50,249	
	Till Till Tellally Value E30,248	
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5P0R-4	GRANGE BRAKE (16) (C) (D) (Mrs J Mould) N Telesco-Davies 11 100	1
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07-802.	CAPIL DE BROOM (FR) (42) (H de Praconted) F Doumen (Fr) 7 10 0 Mr T Doumen (3) B	1
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	- 14 declared -	
COLUMN TO SERVICE	it. 10st. True handicup vedigitat: Bell Sellboy Bel 1985, Grange Brake Sel 685, Cell De Brion Bet 13(b).	1

BET ITMES 25 Stary Bey, 11-2 Times For A Rant, 8-1 Segment Rep. Djectdes, General Wolfe, Trying Again, 10-1 Eudipe, 12-1 Coone HB, 14-1 Berton Benk, Clei De Brion, 33-1 Yorkshite Gain, 40-1 a, 10-1 zonapo, sa is Risky, 50 cilhera : Course (M. 7 10 0 J Osburne 11-2 (W.Derinis) 11 mm

FORM GUIDE SUNY BAY has never had more than four races in a season, so it's little wonder he was able to show improved form at Haydock on his reappearance. The transformation, however, was absolutely etaggering. Soon in front, Suny Bay (umped superbly throughout
and was never going to be caught from a long way out, eventually coming forms it lengths
clear of General Wolfe (giving his best performance but only 5to better in), with Eudipe
(4to pull) another 15 lengths back in tourit. He should confirm that form on his taxoured
softer ground. Beltroott Kirtig came back from a season of it to win last season's Rehearval Chang at Changing by a length and a careter from Tryling Acath, so the fact hearsal Chase at Chepstow by a largth and a quarter from Trying Again, so the fact that he's been off since his ultra-game win in the Scottish National back in April and Rely to be a problem. With the ground coming right for him this relatively lightly-raced nineear-old should give another good account of himself. Trying Again was attempting three year-one snows give enourse good account of primeer. If ying Agent was securitying their miles for the first time when numer-up to Belmont King and might have bester him with a more positive ride. That showed he got the trip and he is 18th better in, but he heart need since and the extra two and a helf furings are still unknown tentiony. As well as lest year's witner Coopee Hill shaped on his comeback against Sanjo at Chestenham a forthight ago, another 24b on his back and an Interrupted build-up make a repeat doubt ful, even with the ground coming right. Barton Bunk retains his form at this level remerkably well, yet its still difficult to envisage him being good enough with top weight. Further down the scale, and amack on the minimum weight, first challenger Tuse For A Run looks a bigger denger. He's had one run over an inadequate trip since just missing out to Barton Bartis's stablemate. King Lucifer on ground too lively at Chellenham leat March and would appear to have been leid out for this.

2.55 FULKE WALWYN CHASE (CLASS C) 28,000 added 2m 4f Penalty Value 25,842

BETTING: 5-2 Feel The Power, 7-2 Yo maga, 12-1 Landed Genity, Sounds Fyre

		use Boy 6 11 0 C Maude 5-2 fev (N Twiston-Devies) 10 ram
3	25	PETER O'SULLEVAN NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS C)
		£5,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £4,240
1	4011	HOLLY'S PRIDE (ST) (D) (Anthony Pys-barry) C Bracks 7 ft 10G Bracky
2		CHERRYMORE (17) (CO) (R & more late & Hitching) May J Primers 6 11 6 A P McCoy
3	42/4-3	ANDANITO (21) (D) (BF) (Boxusprint) Lady Herries 6 11 0R Duraroody
4		BALLET HIGH (F430) (Lady Lloyd Webber) N Handscath 4 11 0
5	0	CACHALOT (21) (Dwight Mekins) C Morlock 5 11 OT J Murphy
6		I RECALL (15) (Mrs S A Copiestons) P Hayward 6 11 0
7		FRISH FROUC (175) (The Nicky Wate Pertnership) R Powe 5 1) 0
8		MARMONAMI (14) (D) (Feltx Posenstielle Wictow & Son) J (Althord 5 1) 0
9	340-33	POLYDAMAS (14) (Martin Bosse) K Bailey 5 17 0
10	008	ROYAL TRUMP (785) (M Pizpatick) M Badstock B 11 CP Holley
Ħ		SHORE PURITY (14) (Mrs. J. Mouska). N. Todaskan-Contest S. T. C
12		SKIMABIT (25th) (Devid C Estaury) C Brooks 6 tr 0
13		SUITOR (40) (Mrs. J. M.A. Churstori) S. Dow 4 11 ()
. 14	6	TIGER LAKE (19) (Brian Solomon and Miss Jo Ann Mood) 5 Daw 4 11 0C F Swen
5	4	BELLARA (175) (Gary Leigh) K Babbaga 5 109G Upton
		- 15 declared -
	THE 7.	He Markium 7.4 Andreito 4.1 Champione 15.2 Debutumus 16.1 Mellife Dalle

1822 i IVICC 7-4 for intendemo, 7-2 Andensto, 4-7 Catercyrdors, 15-2 Polydemyst, 10-1 Hole 14-1 Shore Party, 20-1 Bullet High, 1 Recell, Mah Froplic, Sidemahit, Tiger Lales, 33-1 eth 1996: Hoh Warror 5 11 0 G Bradley 50-1 (C Brooks) 19 nac

2.45 DOUGLAS SMITH MEMORIAL HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS D) 25,500 added 2m 4f £3,843 C4

Destrible, crange chemons, yellow cap (SSYIN (570) (D) (Mrs H Brown) M W Easlerby 10 11 2...

Yellow, royal blue claimons, white steams, royal blue armists and cap 101-SP REAL TONIC (14) (SF) (Robert Ogden) & Richards 7 ft 4

Executed green, pink spots, emerged geten steeves, pink cep MASTER BOSTON (10) (CD) (M K Oldnern) R Woodhouse 9 10 13

Prix and Royal blue (halved), hoped alleven, qualitated cap RHOSSELI BAY (38) (D) (& Mar W. J Williams) Man M Reveloy 9 11 & Royal blue, yellow striped sleeves, royal blue cap, yellow star VAL DE RAMA (18) (D Moriand) D Soith 6 10 6

Orange, light blue and yellow hooped alsows, yellow cap, light blue spots 213-2 RIVER UNSHION (13) (D) (R J Chine) J Howard Johnson 7 10 4

BLUE CHARM (337) (D) (Ma M Undsey) Mrs S Bradburne 7 10 13 .Mr M Bradb

nked), striped sleaves, quartered cap - 10 declared -

ed. clark blue seems, white electes, clark blue seems, PLFETAN (CAN) (21) (D) (J Parks) N Trider 8 11 8.

Maure and pink check, while shows FIS4-3 MONTRAVE (14) (D) (D St Cair) J Golde 8 11 1

rrs. clark blue cap, white star

rsed countered

PUNTERS' GUIDE

NEWBURY

1.15: Sammartino is unbeaten this season, gaining easy wins on good ground at Kempton and on this track. On a similar surface, he would be the selection, but further overnight rain would make today's going very testing. This would bring Juyush, who has won in the heavy, into the argument along with I'M SUP-POSIN. The latter performed well in the mud during a very useful Flat career and Richard Rowe holds the Chapton Hurdle fourth in high regard.

1.50: Mistinguett is a tough mare who should stay well but the Twiston-Davies yard is going through a spell of poor form at present and it seems best to look elsewhere. Angelo's Double acts well in the mud and would be a threat if near peak condition for his reappearance. ANTAPOURA arrives from Ireland with strong claims, having been second to What A Question in this event a year ago.

2.25: Suny Bay is a worthy favourite, but he has always performed best when fresh, and there is no telling whether a Haydock win just 10 days ago has taken the edge of him. TIME FOR A RUN has form in heavy ground and will be held up for a late run by Charlie Swan.

HYPERION'S TV TIPS

NEWCASTLE

1.45: SPEAKER WETHERILL, in great form of late, strolled bome by 22 lengths from Lord Of The West over 3m 1f at Wetherby last time and can follow up. Royal Vacation may prove the biggest danger.

2.15: WHIP HAND, who beat Red Raju by four lengths in a 2m 110yds pattern hurdle at Aintree last time, figures on a very lenient handicap mark here and will be hard to beat Stash The Cash may be the one to chase him

2.45: RIVER UNSHION, who stayed on well to finish 31/2 lengths second to Manor Mico over 2m 4f 110yds at Cheltenham recently, can go one better today. Blue Charm, if stripping fit after a lengthy layoff, could prove the chief threat.

3.15: WELL APPOINTED, who beat China King by a head over 2m 2f at Kelso last time, rema fairly handicapped and can follow up. Quango and Bures look the biggest dangers.

Among the outsiders, Ciel

LINGFIELD

12.10: 1. MUSTANG (Dale Glason) 7-1; 2. Trojan Hero 3-1 lar; 3. Resist The Force 6-1 13 ran. ½, 4. (C Thornton), Tobe: 58.20; 1:90, 52.30, £190. DF: £1140. CSF: £24.38. Tricast: £13103. Tro: £35.70. 12.40: 1. LEFT THE OFFER (P Dobis) 4-6 te; 2. Out Lien Magic: 18-1: 3. Chi-Lin 18-1: 10 ran. ½, 3½, (R Harmord, Tobe: £140; £110, £250. £280. DF: £780. CSF: £1062. Trio: £45.30.

1.10: 1. CLASSY CLEO (A McCarthy) 4-1: 1.10: 1. CLASSY CLEU (A MCCERTRY) 4-1; 2. Sun Dancing 7-2 | item; 3. Private Seel 4-1 9 ran. 7-2 | item (rappy Days Agen. 1½, 3. (P Evens). Tota: CL30; CL70; 5160, C220. DF: \$160. CSP. \$1638. Tricest: CE988. Trice Casen. No. Count.

24330. NP: Carol Singer 140: 1. CHARIMANS CHOICE (W Ryan) 71-2; 2. Without Friends 6-1: 3. Fether Dan 5-2 lax. 14 ran. 6, 1%. (A Jarvis). Tote: 5720; 5250, 6470, 5140. DP: £3820. CSP: £5031. Tho: £5340.

HENNESSY COGNAC GOLD CUP - 10-YEAR-TALE Winner's place in betting: 2 0 2j 2 0 0 0 2 0 6-1 10-1 5-1 5-1 10-1 40-1 10-1 4-1 15-2 11-2 108 100 102 110 106 100 101 100 108 100 9 9 6 7 7 7 9 6 8 7 Profit or loss to \$1 stake: Favourites -\$1000 Second Favourites +\$1425 ercentage of winners placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in last race: 80% hortest-priced winners: One Man (1994) 4-1 Longest-priced winner: Sinton Abbey (1992) 40-1 Top trainers: M C Pipe (2) - Strands Of Gold (1988), Chatem (1991) Top Jockey: P Scudemore (2) - Stranda Of Gold (1988), Chatam (1991) J Osborne (2) - Artic Call (1990), Coome Hill (1996) = joint fevourite; pu = pulled up

FIRST SHOW

Having been 12-1 with Lad- King has been backed from 12-1 brokes prior to his 11-length vicdown to a best-priced 9-1 with tory in the Edward Hanmer Coral and the tote. Memorial Limited Handicap Chase at Haydock, and 4-1 De Brion, who was cut from with William Hill at Monday's 16-1 to 12-1 with William Hill five-day stage. Suny Bay goes yesterday after but is still availinto today's Hennessy Cognac able at 16-1 with Coral and the

Newbury — 2,25										
CORSE	_ c	Н	L	T	ŀ	Ŋ				
uny Bay	94	114	52	52	Į .	tb				
ime For A Run	11-2	6-1	5-1	5-t	l					
ying Again	7-1	<u>6</u> 1	B-1	7-1	1					
einert King	9-1	81	74	9-1		Г				
eddah	81	8-1	9-1	8-1		ļ				
udipe	II-1	71-1	12-1	B-1		!				
COMPA HIS	12-1	10-1	10-1	14-1		Ŋ				
anton Bank	16-1	14-1	16-1	16-1		1				
led De Britan	18-1	2:1	11-1	16-1		9				
arresal Worke	9-1	9-1	8-1	B-1		ļ				
h So Rising	40-1	40-1	40-1	40-1		Ì				
orleshire Gale	<u>25-1</u>	33-1	40-1	Z-1	1	ŀ				
el Stallboy	50-1	33-1	50-1	50-1						
range Breke	40-1	50-1	66-1	40·1		5				
Each wey, a quarter the colds, places 1, 2, 3										

EBBDA IND. COLUMN COLUM 2.30: 1. CALLISOE BAY (JA McCarthy)
9-4: 2. Challenger Du Luc Evers lav; 3.
Geiec Cavaller 5-1.4 ran, hd, ds.; (O Sherwood, Upper Lambourn) Tote: £250. DF:
£190. CSF: £475. NF: Strong Medicine.
3.00: 1. WELSH SILK (Sophe Mitchel)
11-4: 2. Stormy Seasion 10-1: 2. Raffles
Rooster T-8-8 to; 18 ran. rk, 7. (O Gandolfo, Wantage). Tote: £240: £150. £240. £120.
DF: £2550 CSF: £3086. Titcast: £8123. Tho:
£1230.

1230. 3.30; 1. JET BOYS (A PMCCoy) 13-8 fav. 2. Old Rouwel 4-1; 3. The Full Microty 7-2. 3 ran. 1; 18. (Mrs J Pitman, Leper Lambourn) Rote: 0260; 0100 0150 07: 0360 CSF: 0360.

BANGOR
1.20: 1. FORZAIR (P. Carberry) 9-1; 2.
Once More For Luck 1-2 fav. 3. Thomas
Crown 10-1: 11 ran. 2. 17. (J. J. O'Neal, Penrith) Force 8470; 2:10, 2:120, 2:230, 0F; 2:50,
CSF: 2702 Tric; 2:40,
1.50: 1. FOREST NORY (A Magure) 1-4
fav; 2. Cash Flow 12-1; 3. Seletian 9-2: 5
ran. dst. 8. (D Necholson, Verrylo Gulling)
NR: Ah Shush, i: Ah Shush, 2.20: 1. RIVERBANK ROSE (G Tormey)

C35144, 2.50: 1. SISTER ROSZA (J Magee) 3-1: 2. Telnein 6-4 for; 3. Even Blue 7-2. 4 ran. 15. 11, Mars S Lamyrran, Lincoln). Tota: £550. DF: £320. CSP: £7#1. NRs: Master Drum, The

DF: S20. CSF: 27at NRs: Master Drum, The Carris Rus.
3.20: 1. THE NEXT WALTZ (R Supple) 4-1: 2. Fortrin Rosie Down 16-1; 3. Lutto Warm 5-4 tax. 10 rat. 4. (L Lungo, Carrutherstown). Tote: 15.70: \$2.00 ts. 70 ft. 10.00: 27a ft. 10.0

NEWBURY NEWCASTLE HAYDOCK

old Cup	Hai	adica	ip C	hase	Tote, may be the most inter-				
2.25) at Ne	wbu.	ryat	op-p	riced	esting.				
1-4 favou				same	At Newcastle, Whip Hand is				
imi – Cora	l go	just 9) 4 .		a best-priced 2-1 favourite with				
Time For					William Hill for the Newcastle				
0-1 with	Ladi	brok	es a	few	Building Society Fighting Fifth				
reeks ago, i					Handicap Hurdle (2.15) - Lad-				
p to a to	p-pr	iced	6-1	with	brokes go 6-4. The mud-loving				
Villiam Hi	ill, w	hile	Bel	wont	Master Beveled is 6-1 with Lad-				
					brokes - William Hill go 4-1 -				
· New	bury	— 2	.25		while Padre Mio is 16-1 with				
Hosse	_ C	Н	L	T	William Hill - Ladbrokes and				
Surry Blay	94	11-4	52	52	the Tote offer just 12-1.				
Time For A Run	11-2	6-1	5-1	5-1	– Ian Davies				
Trying Again	7-1	6-1	B-1	7-1	1011 501103				

	•				THE					
Horse		H	L	T	William Hill - Ladbrokes and					
Surry Blay	94	11-4	52	5-2	the Tote offer just 12-1.					
Time For A Run	11-2	6-1	5-1	5-1	- lan Davies					
Trying Again	7-1	61	B-1	7-1	Children and the					
Belmont King	9-1	8-1	74	9-1	31 (1 3.17					
<u>Djeddah</u>	81	8-1	9-1	8-1	Newcastle — 2.15					
Eudipe	II-1	JI-1	12-1	B-1	Horse C H L T					
Course HIII	12-1	10-1	10-1	14-1	White Hand 13-8 2-1 6-4 15-8					
Barton Barik	16-1	14-1	16-1	16-1	Nation Daving 41 41 72 41					
Clail De Brian	18-1	2:1	11-1	18-1	Star Rage 41 41 5-1 41					
Garnetal Worke	9-1	9-1	8-1	B-1	Master Beveled 11-2 4-1 6-1 5-1					
On So Rising	40-1	40-1	40-1	40-1	Stant The Cost 6-1 11-2 6-1 6-1					
Varies/hire Galle	Z -1	33-1	40-1	Z-1	Padre Milo 14-1 16-1 12-1 12-1					
Bell Staffboy	50-1	33-1	50-1	50-1	Flying Eargle 33-1 33-1 33-1 33-1					
Grange Brake	40-1	50-1	68-1	40-i	Non Virtuge 33-1 25-1 33-1 25-1					
Bach way, a qu					Each way a fifth the colds, places 1, 2, 3					
C-Coral H-WE	am HALL	\ ad b	roige, T	-Tota	C-Coal H-William Hit L-Lacholes T-Tote					
		_	_							

RESULTS

NEWBURY 1.00: 1. RAINWATCH (A P McCoy) 2-3 fav; 2. Kilbride Lad 7-2: 3. Borazon 25-1 14 ran, 8, 14, (M Pipe, Wellington) Tota: \$160; \$120, \$160, \$340, DF: \$220, CSF: \$182, Tho: 1.30: 1. STRONG CHAIRMAN (T.J.Mur-1.30: 1. STRONG CHAIRMAN (TJ Murphy) 11-10 lav; 2. Yahmi 6-5. 3 ran. 13, (P Nichola. Shapton Mailett, Tote: £170. DF: £130. CSF: £251. Non Runner: Jakamto. 2.00: 1. STORIMYFAIRWEATHER (M A Fitzgaraid) 3-1 ktw; 2. Riparkus 4-1; 3. Mistar Rim 8-1. 7 ran. 3-1 ji lav 'iggins (6th), 6, 8, (N Hamderson, Lamboum). Totes: £230: £210. £220. DF: £920. CSF: £251. Theast £8804. Tho: £2460. NRs: Nahrawali, Noble Colours.

Jackpot: £332.70

Placepot: £1860 Quadpot: £810 Place 6: £16.84, Place 5: £14.95. BANGOR

2-20: T. REVENBANK MOSE (G formey) 8-1; 2. Caracol 7-2; 3. Brumon 14-1, 8 ran. 7-4 fax Country Minstral (pulled up) 9. 2%. (W Clay, Fullard). Total 2700; \$180, \$190, \$2.50. DF: \$1900. CSF: \$2285. Tricast:

Trio: £9030 NFI: Justi Placepot £30030, Quadpot £37930. Piece 8: £8680, Place 5: £7985.

GOING: Good (Good to Firm in a places in the straight). Laff-hand, oval course: , with rising run-in; tough, galoping track. Course is on A1, 5m N of town, Metro service to Four Lane Ends station from Newcestle railway station. But service from there. ADMISSION: Cub 215; Tattersale 29; Silver Ring 24 E2 for OAPs and registered disabled). CAR PARIX: Free. LEADING THANKERS: Nim Revealedy 35-M9 C215% G Richards 2-85 (85%), J Howard Johnson 2-109 (11%). P Cheestrough 11-73 (51%), J Richards 12-85 (85%), J Howard Johnson 2-109 (11%). P Cheestrough 11-73 (51%), J Richards 10-32 (92%). LEADING JOCKEYS: P Nivan 36-121 (285%), B Storey 14-129 (105%), R Garritty 13-73 (75%), R Gusst 6-89 (103%), M Bremmen 5-16 (313%), P Carberry 5-24 (205%). FAVOURITIES: 146-329 (44-4%). BLINICARED FIRST TIME: Sea Victor (315) 12.10 NEWCASTLE BUILDING SOCIETY HURDLE (CLASS D) £3,750 added 3YO 2m Penalty Value £2,841 - 15 declared -BETTING: 9-4 Sad Mad Bad, 7-2 Coral Island, 11-2 City Hell, 10-1 Russian Aspect, 12-1 Bernburgh Boy, Freedom Chance, Sabre Darcer, 14-1 Holt Explores, Neronian, 16-1 Sparky, 26-1 others 1996: Jackson Park 3 10 12 Fl Durwoody 2-1 fav (T Easterby) 24 ran 12.40 STANLEY RACING NOVICE CHASE (CLASS C) 26,300 added 2m 41 Penalty Value £4,358 205-3 BURNT BIP (13) (D) (BIF) (N B Meson Parris Ltd) G M Moore 7 ff 4 ______ I Callaghen 00/00 ELBAENT OF RISK (245) (The Trunky Partnersho) W Curringhem 7 ft 4 _____ N Smith 502-35 MENALUK (17) U.S Stepherson) P Circestrough 7 ft 4 _____ R Gardity 00F-1/3 MINSTER (LDNY (20) (Mrs P A H Hartey) M W Easterby 6 ft 4 ._____ P Carberry 30F-5 PHAR ECHO (13) (D) (S H C Racing) L Lungo 6 ft 4 ______ R Supple 33-440 OURSALL CROSSETT (5) (Mrs Karen Woodnesd) E Caine 12 ft 4 ______ S Taylor (5) - 6 declared -BETTING: 8-11 Burnt Imp, 3-1 Minuter Glory, 9-2 Phar Echo, 8-1 Menaldi, 16-1 Element Of Risk, 66-1 Outrali Crossett 1996: Sparky Gayle 6 11 9 8 Storey 4-6 fav (C Parker) 10 ren 1.10 NORTHGATE TRUCK RENTAL NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 3m Penalty Value £2,253

- 6 declared -BETTING: 15-8 Old Hush Wing, 9-4 For Cathal, 11-4 Birthdale, 10-1 Cypress Avenue, 14-1 Grace-

HYPERION

2.15 Whip Hand

2.45 River Unshion

3.15 Well Appointed

1.45 NORTH EAST AUTO TRADER HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) £9,500 added 3m £6,424 /mpr- EASBY JOKER (287) (C) (BP) (C) R Orderd) S Kettlewell 9 to ______P M Stack, red crose of loneine, showes and cap Stack, red crose of loneine, showes and cap Stack, red crose of loneine, showes and cap Stack, within showes, block cap, white dismond Stack, within shows, block cap, white dismond 2P4/3- SILVER STICK (1999) (C) (D) floord Mentors M W Eastraty 10 to 15 ______R Genti Bille, forage siteses, brown cap

112-3 ICPMIORE-SPEED (31) (K M Dacker) Mrs S Smith 10 10 11

Dark bile, white cross belie, yellow and brown hosped siteses, yellow
231U31 ROYAL VACATION (21) (C) (D) (G P Edwards) (G M Moore 8 10 6

Emerity green, black such and armiles

114-F4 CATS RUM (13) (Mrs Ann Key) J Upson 9 10 0

Brown, dark biles copy

- Adeclared -Affininum weight: 10st. True handicap veight: Cats Fun 9st 12b. BETTING: 13-8 Speaker Weatherfit, 3-1 Kearnore-Speed, 5-1 S. Cats Rus, 10-1 Easby Joker ed, 5-1 Silver Stick, 13-2 Royal Vecation, 8-1

Cas Run, 10-1 Eastly Johan

See: Turning That 9 Th 13 A Maguile 7-4 fav (D Mcholaron) 9 ran

FORTM GUIDD:

There is no reason why Royal Vecation should not run well following his course success (3m 8f) from Physicisch Bullics three weeks ago – provided the ground does not detartonate. But it is possible conditions will turn against him and there must be a slight doubt, loc, over Kenmorre-Speed's staying power. He gets the trip but needs good ground to be truly effective over it on a course like this. SPEAKCE WEATHERILL has been winning in the style of an improved inome and although he hasn't necessarily achieved anything brilliant, he impressed with his jumping when getting the better of two rivels over the extended three miles at Wetherby last time - running on strongly. Cals Run did not look too appreciative of the sicky ground when last of four to him Of Praise at Towcester last time, but sloppy jumping was the main cause of his downial. The weight could beat Eastly Jokar, while Silver Stick, in with a chance at his best, raced only once last season and has been off the course for 398 days. Selection: SPEAKER WEATHERILL 2.15 NEWCASTLE BUILDING SOCIETY 'FIGHTING C4 £35,000 added 2m Penalty Value £21,119

186/24 PADRE MIO (11) (CD) (Lady Lloyd Webber) C Brooks 9 ft 7 ... Pink and gray demonds, pink cap

2000- MASTER BEVELED (F11) (D) (Alts E J Willams) P Evens 7 11 4

Dark blue, pink size dark blue stenes, pink cap, dark blue ster

POS-15 STAR BAGE (13) (CD) (J David Abell) M Johnston 7 11 2

Wille, spir blue spoks, while stenes, Spil blue cap, while spots

1-084 NATIVE-DARFIGE (13) (D) (William Keneri) W P Mallmath 8 10 11

William, and panel and cheurons on alsower, shipled cap

20-21 WHEP HAND (8) (CD) (Lady Lloyd Westber) J (FitcGenal 6 10 9.

rec, was epasses, was epasses, was epasses, and seems

- 8 declared
- 8 declared
Minimum weight: 10st 4b. True handicep weights: Non Wintage Set 12b, Flying Eagle Set 6b.
BETTING: 15-8 Whip Hand, 7-2 hadve-Darrig, 9-2 Star Rage, 5-1 Meeter Beveled, 6-1 St
Cash, 12-1 Padre Mio, 25-1 Non Vintage, 33-1 Flying Eagle

S96: Spece Trucker 5 10 4 J Shortt 5-2 [Mrs J Harringforth] 8 ran

FORM GUIDE

Pedre Mio, who was novice chasing in 1934-65, care out to win this the next season, but had 10st 10ib that day. WHIP HAND looks the up-and-coming member of this slightly disappointing field and although he had only two rivels at Aintree (conditions hundle) eight days ago, he stuiced in from Red Raje, who is no mug. There was no disgrace in sling to beat Sermanting at Newbury the time before and he showed solid novice from last eason after missing the 1935-96 campaign. Stash The Cash is useful but has had a lot of racing compared to Whip Hand. Still, he is a genuine sort and he will enjoy himself off a low weight. Plying Eagle is best watched after his Aintree fourth to Good Vibes (although being looked at the start might have affected his performance), but Star Rage seems best at this try despite his staying power. He won the County Hundle two seasons ago and his fifth to Mr Percy in a hot handcap at Chaltenham 13 days ago shows he retains plenty of zest.

- 10 doctored -- 10 doctored -10 doctored FORM GUIDE

Some old flames run in this, but it is hard to believe Real Tonic showed his true form at Ayr last time (guilled up), in the race won by Any Port from Pariah and Montrava. Real Tonic, with 10th less in the plate, could do better, but his jumping has never been without blembers and preference is for RIVER, UNSHIDON whose low weight could be a big bonus if he gets the soft ground he likes. He ran well when second to Manor Mieo at Challenham 15 days ago and has a bit more scope for improvement from several of those higher up the weights, although Montrave ran a rice race read, even though last of four, at Ayr last March and acts on any going.

Selection: RIVER UNSHION 3.15 CHISHOLM BOOKMAKERS HANDICAP HURDLE C4 (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m Penalty Value £3,388 White, North Oble sports, while decrees, North Oble cap, while sports 105-32 OLUANGO (18) (BP) (L. Milligan) J. FiccGenetid 5 11 3

Emerald green, brown chearon and armia 4PH21 BURIES (9) (D) (J.H. Hewitt) Mrs.J. Brown 6 11 1... Black and overgre check, ofnerrone on sleeves, plack cap, overgre di HOUSE OF DRIEAMS (इ) (4 & M Leisure Ltd) G M Moore 5 10 18 es, black cao, arange diamond BETTING: 7-2 Sea Victor, 4-1 House Of Dreams, 9-2 Durano, Ocango, 13-2 Bures, 7-1 Well Ap-

BETTING: 7-2 Sea Victor, 4-1 House Of Dresms, 9-2 Ourseo, Ocango, 13-2 Bures, 7-1 Well Appointed, 12-1 Double Agent
1990: Cross Line 5 10 5 M Dayer 2-1 lav (M W Easterby) 10 nm
PORIM GUIDE

Durrano has not made a very good fist of chasing so far and is being given a confidencerestored. He is talanted enough to run well under top weight, but SEA VICTOR, is interesting with the shades fitted efter nurving on sheadly to be fourth to Star Markst at Warwick,
when he could have done with a faster gallop. A good stayer on the lavel, he looks well
weighted over hundles. Bures, who has been in good form, will ensure the good gallop
that Sea Victor needs, while House Of Dresma, it from the Fist, has shaped nicely in
finishing second with big weights at Heathard and Catterick. Queston has detire but is
none too consistent.

- 6 deciered

BETTING: 4-6 Space Trucker, 11-8 Zebedi, 14-1 The Secret Grey, 16-1 UK Hygiene, 20-1 Robins Pride, 25-1 Our Nain Man

3.45 HAYDOCK GOLD CARD HANDICAP HURDLE (Qualifier) (CLASS B) 27,000

9.00 CHARLESTON MANOR SELLING STAKES (CLASS G) \$2,500 added 2YO 7f

- 10 declared -BETTING: 15-8 Temploy Cirl, 5-2 Sherp Monkey, 9-2 Sing For Me, 13-2 Semmeraed, 10-1 Manghie's Pession, 16-1 Larguenia, 20-1 others

9.30 HEENS HANDICAP (CLASS F) \$3,000

CH230 FEATHERSTONE LANE (11) (CD) Mess L Statul 697.

520120 ALLIAZ (43) (CD) Gey Kellevsy 7 9 6 A Whelen (3) 11 000000 SUPER ROCKY (28) (CD) R Bazhrar 895 H Bajtiene (8) 98 06365 BASHFUL BRANE (8) (0) B Baugh 6 9 2 P Roberts (3) 3

- 13 declared -FTTING: 9-2 for Age, 11-2 Mobalino, 8-1 Mister Raider, 7-1 Silk Cottage, 1 Featherstone Lane, 9-1 Afez, 10-1 Village Native, Beathful Brave, 12-1 Ming, Shadow Jury, Susbyork, 18-1 Ma Vielle Pouque, 20-1 Super Rocky

added 5f

HAYDOCK

NEWCASTLE

1.45 Speaker Weatherill

12.10 City Hali

1.10 Birkdale

12.40 Burnt Imp

1.05 Lansdowne 1.40 Mr Fudge 2.10 Him Of Praise 2.40 Native Shore 3.10 Space Trucker 3.45 Deano's Beeno GOING: Good to Soft.

land, 16-1 Jolly Heart 1996: Agistment 5 10 12 M Dwyer 100-30 (J FitzGerald) 25 ran

© Course is near junction of A580 and M6. Newton station 2m. ADMISSION: County Stand 517; Tattersaile 510; Newton Stand 55 (OAPs half-price in Tattersails and Newton Stand). CAR PARK:

THE DEADING TRAINERS: M Pipe 25-117 (21.4%), G Richards 23-61 (25.3%), Mrs M Reveley 13-62 (21%), D Nicholson 12-57 (24%), G LEADING JOCKSYS: C Misude 7-31 (22.5%), R Farrant 3-21 (43.3%), R Johnson 2-7 (23.6%), T Jenks 2-16 (12.5%) ● FAVOURITES: 129-312 (#13%). BLINKERED FIRST TIME: The Secret Grey (\$10).

1.05 NORTHERN CLAIMING HURDLE (CLASS F) £2,750 added 2m 4f

WOLVERHAMPTON

Village Native

(9.00), Statesyork (visored) (9.30).

HYPERION

7.00 Gralmano 7.30 Kalamata 8.00 Corniche

Quest 8.30 Raise A Prince 9.00 Teeploy Girl 9.30

GOING: Standard.

STALLS: 71 & tm 61 - outside; rest - inside.

DRAW ADVANTAGE: Figh from 61 to 1m 44.

Fibresand, left-hand, oval course.

Course is N of iown on A449. Wolverhampion station 1m. AD-MISSION: Cub 215; fartersals 25 (OAP members of Diamond Cub 24); Viewing Restaurant 22590 including enfrance and meal. CAR PARK: free.

PARK: tras.

LEADING TRAINERS: R Hollinshead 60-577 (10.4%), M Johnston 53-230 (23%), A Bailey 34-291 (10.7%) P Hastern 33-185 (10.5%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: G Duffield 27-178 (10.2%), F Lyngth 24-234 (10.3%), D Wright 23-277 (10.3%), Den McKerown 21-203 (10.5%).

FAVOURITES: 337-1226 (22.4%).

SLINKCHED FIRST TIME: Largements (viscored) (3.00), Summerseed (20.00).

7.00 D) £4,000 added 2YO 1m 100yds

MULGRAVE MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS

LADBROKE FREEPHONE 0800 524 524 HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,200 added 2m 4f

- 11 declared -SETTING: 2-1 Lanedowne, 5-2 Robby Yours, 5-1 Shahrani, 7-1 Native Field, 10-1 Wedneda, 12-1 Feir And Fancy, Roses Scramble, 20-1 Cry Beby, The Operator, 25-1 Emerated Venture, 33-1 Misty Grey

-5 declared -Athenum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Another Course 9st 12th. BETTING: 9-4 Bullyline, 5-2 Koo's Promise, 4-1 Early Drinter, 9-2 Mr Pudge, 7-1 Another Course

2.10 TIM MOLONY MEMORIAL HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) £15,000 added 3m 4f 110yds

0 SHE'S A GEM (21) M's N Macasiny 58 ... P McCabe (3) 6
10 00 SOAP STONE (16) A Baley 8 9 ... K Hodgson 5
- 10 declared BETTING: 5-2 Reference, 5-1 Ferghans Ma, 4-1 Mareette, 5-1 Grahysno,
8-1 Hapurean Highway, 12-1 Spirit Of Love, Secrecy, 20-1 Gentus, 23-1

7.30 FROST CLAIMING STAKES (CLASS F)

BETTING: 2-1 State Approval, 9-2 Kniemeta, 6-1 Militaria Star, 7-1 Petostin, 8-1 Private Patrice, 9-1 Brodesta, 10-1 Noval Games, 12-1 Shariya 14-1 Hilizait, 16-1 Tycopp Tina, 20-1 Pauri Analyscaary, 33-1 Hippios

8.00 CLAIME COURT ISSUE & mares 7f

CLAIRE COURT HANDICAP (CLASS F)

-1131 DANGER BABY (20) P Bowen 7 II 5 _____ R Johnson B 300-1 DOM SAMOURA! (11) M POP 6 II 0 ____ C Meude B 831-1 HM OF PRAISE (15) O Sterwood 7 II 0 ____ J A McCarety 521/P PROFESSOR STRONG (511) P Ndrois 9 107 L Cummin (5) 56721- MISS DISKIN (200) R Budder 8 ID 4 ____ G Hogan (3) PEO-P3 PRIK GM (7) (C) M Hammond 10 10 1 ____ Mir C Bonner (5) ___ 7 declared -___ 21 Declared Raby, 100-30 Ham Of Praise, BETTING: 11-4 Does Samoursi, 3-1 Danger Baby, 100-30 Him Of Praise, 6-1 Pink Gin, Miss Distin, 10-1 Sister Stephanie, 12-1 Professor Strong 2.40 VICTOR NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,000 added 2m 4f

30177 MATINE SHORE (12) (D) C Mann 5 17 32 Mir K R O'Rhan (7)
343-0 BOURBON DYNASTY (13) G Richards 4 10 2 ... S Burns (7)
479-70 CHIEF CRIPPLE (18) W Kerny 4 17 2 ... C McCommek (7)
2002; WINSELLA MASTER (675) A Whiten 8 10 2 ... R Johnson
(60: RELICANDER (274) Mis J Pilman 7 10 2 ... D Leafly - 8 declared -SETTING: 6-4 Native Shore, 2-1 Vaclenya, 5-1 Minella Master, 8-1 Bour-tion Dynasty, 10-1 Bellancier, 12-1 Rossarino, 50-1 Chief Chippie, Prin-

004P5 OUR MAIN MAN (F12) R Whiteler 7 11 0. _____ D Benday P3U2P ROBINS PRICE (11) (D) C Popham 7 11 0. ____ T Descende

Minimum weight: 10st. True handlesp weights: Castle Secret (at 4b, Magalad Bat 12D, Steepy firms that 2b, Menshair that 2b. BETTING: 7-4 Deservis Beers, 2-2 Balamab, 5-1 Outset, 8-1 Mentanera Tow-ers, 10-1 Combert, 12-1 Major Bell, Allegation, 14-1 Castle Secret, 16-1 Steepy River, 20-1 Magalad

3.10 MAKERFIELD NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m

-60000 SHOWGIRL (8) (C) J.H Wison 38 13 S D Williams 8 006642 HEATHYARDS LADY (8) (CD) R Holmited 68 11 F Lynch 6 049- FLEWE D'OR STORD D Haydn Jone 38 6 S. S Williamstr 9 44080 CULEDAS STROLLER (118) (C) (D) R PAROCCI 68 5

Promite Over, 19-1 Ger of the Control of the Co

8.30 BARTLETT HANDICAP (CLASS D)

25,000 804061 111 41

26,001 RAISE A PRINCE (FR) (19) (D) S Woods 4 10 0.... N Day 5
25565 PRINCE DANCIG (19) (CD) D Murray Smith 8 9 00M Renton 1
26,000 ARCTIC THANDER (89) (D) B Paling 6 9 10 P Roberts (3) 7

26,001 ARCTIC THANDER (89) (D) P Roberts (8) 7

26,002 RAISE (IA) (CD) (BF) J Pearce 4 9 8.... M Wightem 2
26,003 GLOW FORUM (20) (CD) L Mortague Half 6 9 8... F Lynch 9
26,000 VERDALOD (827) (C) M Lohnston 5 9 5 ... Deal Micklown 11
26,000 ARCHE (IA) (14) (C) W Lohnston 5 9 5 ... Conviers (3 4
2-3372 ERUSTED (120) (BF) Sr M Priscott 3 9 2 G Duffield 3
26,000 PREMIER DANCE (14) (CD) D Haydh Jones 10 9 0

- Lokeling (10) REP (10) R

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The: ES340
2.10: 1. APOLLO RED (Candy Morrs)
0.1: 2. Speedy Chassic 7-1: 3. Scissor
Ridge 9-1 13 rain. 7-2 lav Robo Megic. Hd.
1/b. (G L Moors) Robe: £930; £230 £300.
2310. DF: £1800. CSF: £8583. Ricast:
£48140. Tric: £17070. NF: Lord Sky.
2.40: 1. CHURCHILL'S SHADOW (C
Lowline) 4-1; 2. Baddrinath 12-1; 3.
Wilchfinder 11-4 fav. 12 rain. 2. 1/k. (B
Pearcs). Tota: £780; £230, £390. £200. DF:
£93020. CSF: £5127. Trics £14003. Trics
£3380. and: 1. Mystagogue (P Domis) 7-2;

3.10: 1. MYSTAGOGUE (P Dobbs) 7-2; 2. Zada 5-1; 3. Casino Ace 8-11 fav. 7 nm. 1/3. 3. (R Hannon), Tota: 52.70; £140, £300. DF: E1450. CSF: £2196. NF: Yoursch. 2.40: 1. ANOTHER MONK (Mr R Gust) 6-4 far; 2. Vrenstan 14-1; 3. Don't Drop Bombs 9-1. 17 nm. 21/2. 2. (R ingram). Tota: £210: £10. £230. £190. £330. DF: £24.70. CSF: £2499, Titosti. £165.59. Tro: £38.70. NR: Precious Wonder. Placepot: £3730. Quadpot: £2030. Place 6: £35.12 Place 5: £20.55

THE INDEPENDENT RACING SERVICES

 $0891_{261} +$ LIVE COMMENTARIES RESULTS 971 981 972 982 973 983 974 984 WOLVERHAMPTON (E) 975 985 ALL COURSES RESULTS 0891 261 970

STATE OF STA



Leap in the Park: Suny Bay kicking up the dirt at Haydock ten days ago for an all-the-way victory that ensured favouritism for today's big race

Bradley forecasts a bright future for Suny

It is 13 years since a favourite won the Hennessy Gold Cup, but a rider with a chequered career in the race is feeling lucky on board the chaser who will carry most punters' cash,

ports Richard Edmondson.

FAX: \$17! 293 2505

When it comes to short careers, National Hunt jockey is right up there with kamikaze pilot and Oilver Reed's drinking companion. Graham Bradley is the exception to the rule.

shireman ought really to be running a tipping service, guesting on the proliferation of racing programmes that have risen like weeds, or just plain eating. However, the old bones are still groaning on and they are operating pretty much in unison if the jockey's continued support from the nation's trainers is a barometer.

Bradley has had a choice for when Challenger du Luc, hot this afternoon's Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury. He could have ridden either last year's the line and beaten a head by Winner, Coome Hill, or Suny Callisoe Bay.

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makers included, expect to be accepting the trophy-polishing

of the race.

Bradley has plumped for the latter and there is historical perspective at play here as some judges anticipate Suny Bay may progress from this contest to win the Gold Cup. The last beast to manage this double was Michael Dickinson's Bregawn, who, back in 1982, was entrusted to a young rider at Harewood who did not spend a fortune on razors, one

Bradley could have ridden a years ago, but was aboard Black Couldn't Be Better strode home. son and although we know he Hennessy with Eudipe, follow- gets a trip of this nature.

A treble narrowly eluded Tony

McCoy at Newbury yesterday

favourite for the Jacky Upton

Handicap Chase, was caught on year's Murphy's Gold Cup.

Bay, whom many, the book- Brooks was close to being a for- goes well on the soft or heavy lorn figure that day as he felt he I wouldn't mind if there was no owed Bradley one. Today is more rain as the ground at Hayduties after today's 41st running payback time. The jockey apreciates it.

> "Suny Bay was so impressive at Haydock [in the Edward Hanmer Handicap Chase earlier this month] that I had to stay with him," he said yesterday. "I

RICHARD EDMONDSON **NAP: Suny Bay** (Newbury 2.25) NB: I'm Supposir (Newbury 1.15)

trainer, Charlie Brooks, two Hennessy, written all over it. pletes his 40th and last com-

of handling when winning last

solutely pinged off it. "I said afterwards that he was up there with Bregawn and Wayward Lad as the best I've

dock was beautiful and he ab-

ever ridden and, while he's got to give quite a lot of weight away to one or two useful horses, I do think he's got a great chance. He jumps and stays and he's getting better all the time." There is a caveat in the fact

that Burrough Hill Lad in 1984 was the last favourite to win a was amazed at how easily he Hennessy. There are others

Yesterday, McCoy waited until other fellow didn't," said win- target 15 days ahead of last

ing the exploits of Strands Of Gold (1988) and Chatam (1991).The five-year-old has the

blinkers removed for this afternoon's assignment, but would certainly have more chance if all his rivals were fitted with pillowcases.

The one that everyone seems to fear is Ireland's Time For A Run, who significantly sneaks into the race on 10st. His foxy connections are owner JP McManus and trainer Edward O'Grady (the artist formerly Brion, who is owned by a memknown as Eddie). Their vehicle has hardly branded reliability as Henri de Pracomtal, therefore won and it was a performance with pedigree in the race (not his most potent weapon though, overrated. Trying Again too is "He rides, and feels, like a mentary of the great race). fancied, but this seems hardly bowever, the only win bet ap-Humour as the stablemate much improved horse this sea- Martin Pipe is after his third the occasion to examine if he

> inguett will be a popular choice, but in a protracted contest in this ground only for the brave Spring Marathon (1.50) may be Martin Pipe vesterday broke more than a coincidence selecly demonstrated how the Pipe beaten rival only to get no re- his own record for the fastest tion. Pm Supposin (next best 1.15) is well fancied by his team chaser needs the most patient sponse from the horse on the century of jump winners with for the Gerry Feilden Hurdle. odds-on shot Rainwatch at "Callisoe Bay battled and the Newbury. He was reaching the

An each-way consideration is Belmont King, whose stable is going well and is not adverse to the odd yomp, as he showed

when winning the Scottish Na-

In addition, François Doumen does not come over here just to enjoy our fine cuisine and sartorial elegance, and one of his entry should reach the frame. The general belief is that the Frenchman to figure will be Djeddah, but he is unlikely to appreciate the ground. Ciel De ber of the Hennessy family, looks the one for hopeful specheads and strong constitutions, pears to be on the short-priced SUNY BAY (nap 2.25).

Earlier on the card, Mist-They are not frightened of the likely favourite, Sanmartino. especially in receipt of 6lb.

K is for ...

Kelleway, Gay: Young, upwardly mobile trainer who seems to have inherited all of her father's aptitude for preparing horses, but fortunately rather less of his optimism. Paul K was famous for setting his charges apparently impossible tasks, in the certain knowledge that every once in a while, one of them would pop up at 33-1. Gay, by contrast, appears to run a punting stable in the old tradition, based not only on a realistic assessment of a runner's chance, but also a desire to ensure that no winner goes unbacked. This commendable attitude, combined with a rare talent for coaxing improvement from other trainers' cast-offs, will make Kelleway's stable one to keep an eye on for years

Kieren. As in, "Goowon,

punters for most of the last eight months. Strangely enough, one of the best moments of the year for Mr Fallon's army of fans was the bizarre aberration which saw the new champion jockey trying to force Bosra Sham up the inside in the Eclipse Stakes at Sandown Park. Even punters who were all of three thousand miles away, in the beach bars-cum-betting shops which take the SIS feed into the West Indies, could see perfectly well that space on the rail to swing so much as a kitten, but he, for whatever reason, carried on regardless and ended up narrowly beaten. The fallout which followed - not least from Henry Cecil - no doubt persuaded a number of punters that he was unreliable, and thus ensured that there will still be at least a few mugs next year whose scepprices. A level-stakes return for the 1998 season to match this year's incredible £118 may be asking too much, but the Irishman is still any punter's best friend in the

early 1980s. Taking advangreatly inflated prices (4-1, of pounds were on the nose very, very stupid.

weighing room.



GREG WOOD THE A-Z OF BETTING

with off-course bookmakers, at starting price. They would yell their odds as loudly as possible, and the SP reporters from the Sporting Life and Press Association had no choice but to adjust the starting price accordingly. No-one was ever found guilty of conspiring to pull off a knock-out coup, but the suspicion that such shenanigans might be taking place was all the excuse the major bookies needed to begin blowing serious money back to the course, to ensure that starting prices conformed to their own grand plan.

Knowledge, inside: Would

you buy a used car from John de Lorean? Or a burglar alarm from Group 4? Of course you wouldn't. So why is it that normal, rational people lose all grasp of their senses when it seems that someone is letting them in on a racing secret? About 10 Kieren did not have the years ago, for instance, I was standing in a London pub one Saturday night when a dishevelled and wild-eyed drunk wandered past and, for no obvious reason, tipped everyone an "absholute shertainty", which was due to run in a race at Leicester, of all Wednesday. Amazingly enough, the beast in question did indeed appear among the ticism could allow Fallon's runners there four days latmounts to start at backable er, and your correspondent - purely out of academic interest, of course - just happened to stop by a betting shop 10 minutes before the off. The opening show came through at 9-1, which was available for all of five sec-Knock-out: Dubious prac- ible run developed. It tice which was (allegedly) a shortened to 8-1, then 7s, 6s, favourite trick of certain on- 5s and all odds down to 9-4 course bookmakers in the in no more than 60 seconds - so quickly, in fact, that the tage of the pitifully weak man on the Tannoy could not markets at many midweek keep up. The tipster, it apmeetings, a small group of peared, had rather more bookies would find a horse than one regular watering they fancied and lay it at hole, and wherever he was that Wednesday afternoon, say, about a solid 6-4 he was probably still so plaschance). This was not quite tered that, when the horse as suicidal as might first ap- crawled home 12th, he could pear, for the bookies knew see the funny side of it all. that while they would still Hundreds, perhaps thouonly take pennies for it on sands, of people in shops course, their own thick wads across the capital just felt

Don't rule out Barton Bank but the brandy should go to Bay

McCoy caught out as Challenger fades

Richard Dunwoody expert- mount to collar his apparently

run to the line.

the last fence to produce his ming trainer Oliver Sherwood. year's schedule.

Racton Rank: Although now 11, Barton Bank ran a crack- ner at Haydock last week, he er on his seasonal reappearance behind One Man at Wetherby. The flying grey franked the form by winning the Peterborough Chase and even with top-weight this old warhorse will put up a brave

Coome Hill: Back in contention after an injury scare following his third to Banjo at Cheltenham. In races of this catibre a horse has to be 100 per cent and last year's winner carries 24lb more on this ocSuny Bay: An impressive winmade all to win by 11 lengths. With more rain forecast, his chances can only improve and his jockey Graham Bradley is buliish.

Belmont King: No problems with stamina for Paul Nicholls' Scottish Grand National winner but his fitness may be questioned on his first appearance of the season.

Endipe: This horse seems well held after also finishing behind Suny Bay at Haydock. I can't see too much improvement.

The former National Hunt jockey Steve Smith Eccles (right) gives a runner-by runner analysis of today's Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup Chase.

Trying Again: He is having his lengths on just 11b better terms first run of the season but is is another question. nicely weighted and has

Dieddah: François Doumen's sive chaser but this is an awe- enthusiasm.

but whether he can make up 11 tumble last time.

Richard Dunwoody on board. Yorkshire Gale: Another evergreen campaigner but, unlike Barton Bank, I'm not con-Djeddah is a young, progres- vinced he retains his youthful

Oh So Risky: A useful hurdler General Wolfe: Second to Suny in his day but has limited chas-Bay in that Haydock event ing experience. He did take a

asked too many questions on partner Graham Bradley is his seasonal debut and will strip a lot fitter at Newbury. He will appreciate every drop of rain we get!

Bell Staffboy: He ran over hurdles last time but jumping is the name of the game in the

year-old. This definitely can't ter miles.

Ciel De Brion: Another French raider-who is well out of the handicap.

convinced that SUNY BAY will land the prize and I agree with him. The grey is definitely the one they all have to beat but the veteran Barton Bank, who was runner up to Mr Mulligan in the Cheltenham Gold Cup back in March, and the progressive Trying Again will push "Brad" every inch of Grange Brake: Another 11- this extended three and a quar-

> Last week's selection for the First National Bank Gold Cup Handicap Chase at Ascot, Simply Dashing, won at 4-1.

NAPP calls off the punters' crusade

The volunteers who have spent six years campaigning for punters have decided to give up the fight. Greg Wood believes that every backer in Britain was a loser yesterday.

The sums are incredible. Every

year, British gamblers contribute almost £1.4 billion pounds to the Treasury. It is punters who play the horses in betting shops who provide the annual £50m or so which the Levy Board distributes to owners and courses to keep the entire industry afloat. And yet, when volunteers who founded the National Association for the Protection of Punters decided yesterday that the organisation could not go on, they had "just enough money in the account", according to Michael Singer, NAPP's chairman, "to pay the final phone bill".

The dozens of punters who contact NAPP every week with complaints against bookmakers will now have nowhere to turn, "There are millions and millions of consumers who are being denied any form of regulation or protection whatsoever," Singer said yesterday. "It's a national scandal that not a penny of the £1.4bn which the Government receives from gambling is going back to protect the people providing it."

The dissolution of NAPP seemed imminent a little over six months ago, but Singer was persuaded by various contacts in the then Opposition that a Labour government would make all the difference. They had asked the Levy Board which, remember, is simply collecting and dishing out punters' money - for an annual grant of about £250,000 to fund an office and up to five full-time staff (and if that sounds like a lot, it is worth noting that the Levy Board itself spend almost £2m a year on administration).

The money would have allowed NAPP to continue campaigning, among other things, for a betting ombudsman to resolve disputes, a bonding scheme to protect punters when bookies go bust, and tighter guidelines the magistrates who issue betting permits.

At a meeting on Thursday with George Howarth at the Home Office, however, it quickly became clear that new Labour takes a distinctly old Tory approach to punter protection. "We were asking for half of one per cent of the Levy collected," Singer said, "but quite honestly it wouldn't have mattered if we'd asked for a fiver. With this government, you're supposed to give them money, and then you might get a meeting with the top man."

WARWICK

HYPERION 12.30 Sir Lunchalot 1.00 Tidebrook 1.30 Pealings 2.80 Flippance 2.30 Soldier Mak 3.00 Kadastrof 3.30 Timely Magic

escente: Good je Soft.

Left-hand course, Run-in of 240 yards.

Course is viest of city on B4095, Busses from stations at Warwick (tin) spot learnington Spa (2m), ADMISSION: Cub £12. Teleprocess £8 (participant) spatients hatt-price, accompanied under-tile finely, Course £5. CAR PARK: £5 in members; centre of course time.

LINGS-FER TROS; COURSE 12.

O LEADING TRAMERS: M Pipe 27-10! (26.7%) D Nicholson 20
O LEADING TRAMERS: M Pipe 27-10! (26.7%) D Nicholson 20
O LEADING-Pipmen 14-55 (22.7%) N Telebon-Owins 11-75 (14.7%)

O LEADING-JOCICITYS: W Marston 10-51 (2.5%), J R Kavensigh

9-50 (12.9%), R Figures 5-5! (15.7%), A Thornton 6-48 (12.5%).

O FAVOURTIES: 56-363 (10.2%).

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Brombellow (15.0).

12.30 QUINTON NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS C) 54,850 added 2m

Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Makin 7 11 0 ... S Michael Selection (F21) (BF) P Michael Selection (F21) (B

O/ROD MILL BAY SAM (224) R Diction 8 11 0 ______ D Byrote PADION'S STORAL (7918) S Dow 5 11 0 _____ W Micharland 25-3 ROYAL SCRETAR (14) (8F) M Templatus 5 11 0 _____

- 19 declared -BETTING: 3-1 Fill The Bill, 4-1 Sir Lunchaldt, 9-2 Gipey Geof, 11-2 Roy-al Scimiter, 7-1 Albeha, 8-1 Harriequin Chorus, 12-1 What A Fuss, 20-1 1.00 TILTYARD BRIDGE HANDICAP CHASE

(CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m 3/43-3 MORTHERN SADOLER (19) (CD) R Hodges 10 11 T

A conserve - Allerinum weight: 10st. Two immalicap weight: Weehaby 9st 13th. BETTING: 10-11 Tidebrook, 2-1 No Light, 7-2 Northern Sandler, 12-1 Wee-1.30 WARWICKSHIRE COLLEGE OF AGRI-CULTURE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS

B) £7,000 added 2m 3f - 5 decisred -was, 6-2 Toby Brown, 7-2 Penlings, 5-1 Star Selection.

2.00 STAMINA TEST HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £7,000 added 3m 2f 1 3F33F- FULL OF OATS (236) (CD) Mass H Knight 11 12 D...

2.30 WARWICK UNIVERSITY HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS F) £2,575 added 2m

15-001 SECRET CHT (14) (D) Mrs J Planer 4 11 1 (SP-00 WOODLANDS LAD TOO (S) P Prichard 5 100 R Ballette

weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Chilly Led Bot 12th, Woodlands Lac 100 tox 170. BETTING: 9-4 Gasy Pastel, 9-2 Secret Gift, 11-2 Noble Tom, 7-1 Soldier Melt, 8-1 Sibertan Mystic, 9-1 Pair Of Jacks, 10-1 Store Tiges, 12-1 Mys-I and Topo Bast 78b.

3.00 TOWER NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m 604-21 KADASTROF (FR) (10) (CD) R Dictar 7 11 9...

- 3 courses -BETTING: organ Kadestrol, 11-4 Starach Friend, 7-2 John Drumen, 7-1 Srackenst, 18-1 Mr Poppleton. 3.30 NORTON LINDSEY STANDARD FLAT RACE (CLASS H) £1,500 added 2m

4 CALDANIIS (30) Mis M Jones 51 4 Missey (3) EDIDYS SON D Nicholson 5 Ti 4 R Massey (3) 6 GOOD VIEW (11) D Nicholson 5 Ti 4 R Thomston (5) CHARMATIC (21) K Bishop 4 11 4 ______ 8 Supple (5) RETURN OF THE MAC M R Books 5 11 4 ...__ L Suthem (7) 454 CHABMATIC (21) K Bishto 411 4... RHOSNIGR BAY Mas H Knight 4 11 4 ______P Henley (3)
ROSCORRE P Hobbs 4 11 4 ______Mr R Widger (7)
ROYAL SPARK P Hobbs 5 11 4 ______Mir R Widge (8) 0 SAFE TO ASSUME (21) R Brazington 6 11 4 J Power (7) TARA-BROGAN (Villams 4 t) 4.....E Husband (S- TIMELY MAGIC (200) J Noville 5 11 4 J Mague (3) C CATCH THE ACTION (77) M R Booky 4 10 13 J Abspect (5)

- 16 deci BETTING: 9-4 Eddy's Son, 9-2 Rinemely Bay, 11-2 Tranky Magic, 8-1 Good View, 10-1 Caldamus, Roscorrie, 12-1 Royal Speck, 14-1 Cantonnatic, Tera-Brogue, 16-1 others.

Friend of the horses finally hangs up his microphone

Peter O'Sullevan will call the horses home for the last time at Newbury this afternoon, bringing down the curtain on half a century of commentary for the BBC. His contribution to racing has been remarkable.

He may not feel like it as he squeezes into his eyrie above Newbury this afternoon, just four months shy of his 80th birthday, but Peter O'Sullevan is the racing equivalent of Elle MacPherson

Just as fashion has "the Body", so the turf has "the are few greater accolades than ommendation - "he is as good to lay claim to the definite as I am bad"-soon permanently article. He deserves it, of behind the microphone which course. When sports broadcasting was all clipped moustaches and God Save The King, evan has campaigned to imthe Voice was there, with its tidings from deep within the fog that was monochrome.

It brought Arkle and Mill House to the masses, called Red Rum home as he won his in the Gold Cup 12 years later. evan was a crucial ally.

Above O'Sullevan was the Saturday background noise for generations of British children. People who have never visited a betting

leaders pass the furlong pole.

only a bloody commentator." he the attention which his impending retirement has attracted. In truth, though, commentating has been just a small part of O'Sullevan's life on the turf.

As a punter and an owner, he has fed money into both ends of the machine, and as a journalist he has helped with the servicing and even the occasional major overhaul. For 36 years, until 1986, his column in the Daily Express was impeccably informed, thoughtful and a regular source of winners.

He was instrumental in the paper's sponsorship - recently discontinued, much to his disgust - of the Triumph Hurdle, a race won in his colours by Attivo in 1974. His commentary on the closing stages was famously impartial, though shortly afterwards came one of the only recorded instances of an O'Sullevan "errr". "Attivo," he said, "owned by... errr... Peter O'Sullevan." He sounded almost embarrassed.

and the archives, not to mention ness of having a right crack at for the job of BBC Racing Corhis autobiography, Calling The a horse, but if it appears that respondent, 24 hours before

Horses, but the strand which has linked it all is sometimes overlooked. For O'Sullevan has always been thoroughly biased - he is firmly, irredeemably on the side of the horses.

This was not something that might have been predicted when the asthma which blighted his childhood was wrongly diagnosed by one doctor as an allergy to horses, and by the time his mistake had been realised. O'Sullevan's beloved first pony had been sold. Not before it had kindled a

passion for all things equine, though, and he joined the Press Association's racing desk in 1944. Not long afterwards, he was the race-reader assisting Peter Dimmock, one of the BBC's Voice", and however you first commentators, and thanks choose to measure fame, there to Dimmock's generous reconly now is he ready to leave.

Through all that time, O'Sullprove the lot of the horses, and in doing so has shown more compassion and vision than racing administrators half his age. When, for example, an American "outsider" called Carrie Humble dethird National "like a fresh cided to set up the first (and still horse", and then Desert Orchid the only) centre in Britain to re-- "he's beginning to get up" - habilitate ex-racehorses, O'Sull-

have been very BY GREG difficult to get as far as we have without his name WOOD being behind us, and without him continuing to talk about us."

shop or racecourse in their she says. "The first time I spoke adult life can still be swept back to him, I was a little in awe of 20 years by the sound of the him, he was the great Voice of Voice changing pitch as the Racing, but he just made me want to do the best that I could. But it is the sort of celebrity I sometimes say to the people which can work both ways. "I'm in the yard, 'Remember that Peter O'Sullevan could turn un said recently, as he considered here tomorrow. I want this place clean'. He's a fine man. and I haven't met very many of those in this world, and I'm a well-travelled lady. He's a man I wouldn't want to let down."

> The good news for the horses is that the campaigning will not stop. "Racehorses should be caught," O'Sullevan says, "before they start the downward spiral that ends at very unappealing markets. I think that it's one of the good things about our time that there is a greater feeling of compassion towards animals, a feeling that we are responsible, as so-called superior creatures, for the lesser creatures. Hopefully, we will get an initiative going in time to get official funding for rehabilitation, and that's something I

would hope to be involved in. Abuse of the whip, too, will still nag at him in retirement. "There is no excuse for abuse, and I think there is abuse at times when horses are tired and the money is down. We are This much is in the form book slightly accustomed to this busi-



Peter O'Sullevan thinks 'it's one of the good things about our time that there is a greater feeling of compassion towards animals'

Photograph: Robert Hallam

lengths to achieve their aims, racing will lose its appeal."

It would be a fitting tribute. to the man perched high above the grandstand if the jockeys riding a finish in the Hennessy left their whips unflourished. Wishful thinking, perhaps, but the race itself is still a carefully chosen sign-off.

The best two horses to carry his colours, Attivo and Be Friendly, a fine sprinter in the late 1960s, were both winners at Newbury. It was also the site of a serious falling-out with his employers when, in 1979, the Grandstand director cut short the Hennessy coverage to catch the communal singing before a rugby match at Twickenham. It is 32 years, too, since O'Sullevan helped to audition Julian Wilson (not to mention Michael Stoute)

racing people go to extreme Arkle won the Hennessy, giving was saying, 'this cannot be a 33lb to the runner-up.

"That's why I fancy packing up at Newbury," he says. "Also, it's not far from Chelsea, and there aren't going to be too many runners in the Hennessy, so I shouldn't make too many cockups. I've been making mistakes recently, and I was thinking that if I wrote another book, I'd call it 'Miscalling The Horses.'

He should, at least, be spared a repeat of the worst moment of his 50 years as a commentator, the débade of the 1993 Grand National. "In the Foinavon year [when most of the field fell at the 23rd fence], it was Michael O'Hehir who had to do the difficult job, I had nothing to do except rather uncharitably hope that Foinavon might suffer some very small impediment because I was on Honey End Ithe runner-upl. But the 1993 race was rather fraught. I precious piece of England."

race', but there was always that one per cent of doubt that I might be wrong, and then I'd really have blown it. And then what were you to do when they'd jumped the last, when after all they'd completed two circuits. Did you record it with at least a little hyperbole, or ignore them, which would have seemed

very discourteous." Inevitably, he pitched it just right. O'Sullevan will, as always, be painfully nervous as he prepares for his final day at the office. Even now, his sleep is sometimes disturbed by a nightmare in which dozens of horses are passing his position and he cannot name a single one. He will also acknowledge the tributes, of which there will be hundreds, with all possible modesty. One of the best is offered by Carrie Humble. "He is." she says. "a very



O'Sullevan in 1955: Peter Dimmock's quick assessment of his colleague was 'he is as good as I am bad'

THE VOICE OF RACING

Arkle (1964 Cheltenham Gold Cup): "They're rounding the home turn and this is it! It's Arkle on the stands side for Ireland and Mill House for England on the far side. Arkle just taking the lead as they come to the last fence. it's gonna be Arkle if he jumps it. He's over and clear. This is the champion, this is the best we've seen for a long time. Arkle is the winner of the Gold Cup . . . "

Allez France (1974 Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe): "And Allez France unleashes a run on the outside. And it's Allez France, the Queen of Longchamp, who strikes the front \dots "

Red Rum (1977 Grand National): "He's getting the most tremendous cheer from the crowd. They're willing him home now. The 12-year-old Red Rum, being preceded only by loose horses, . being chased by Churchtown Boy. They're coming to The Elbow. There's a furlong between Red Rum and his third Grand National triumph. And he's coming up to the line to win it like a fresh horse in great style. It's hats off and a tremendous reception - you've nevera heard one like it at Liverpool! Red Rum wins the National ... "

Sagaro (1977 Ascot Gold Cup): "It's Buckskin from Sagaro. Lester Pigg looking to his left for danger. He thinks he's got Buckskin cold! And it's Sagaro now going into the lead. Here comes Ascot history. Sagaro's going to win it for the third time, and gonna coast home at that . . . "

Sea Pigeon (1980 Champion Hurdle): "And Sea Pigeon's going to avenge that defeat of last year! He's striding up to the line, the veteran 10-year-old. He's won it at last! Sea Pigeon wins the Champion Hurdle, Monksfield is beaten for the first time in three years..."

Dawn Run (1986) Cheltenham Gold Cup) "It's Wayward Lad trying to break his Cheltenham hoodoo, being pressed by Dawn Run in the centre. And the mare's beginning to get up! And as they come to the line, she's made it! Dawn Run has won it from Wayward Lad. And jonjo O'Neill punches the air as the mare has made Turf history - she's become the first to win the Champion Hurdle

Desert Orchid (1986 Cheltenham Gold Cup) "Yahoo, who loves the mud is full of running. but Desert Orchid is rallying, he's trying to come again towards the near side. Yahoo on the far side, Desert Orchid on the near side. There's a tremendous cheer from the crowd. Desert Orchid is going to win it! Desert Orchid has won

AN ERA OF ELEGANCE AND ENTHUSIASTS: THE BBC COMMENTATORS WHO PERSONIFIED THEIR SPORTS

The retirement of Peter O'Sullevan signals the passing of a great tradition, the slow ebbing away of commentators motivated by a love of sport and a desire to communicate that passion without embracing the hyperbole or narrow-minded nationalism. Chris Maume looks at

some of the men

who made BBC

institution.

sports coverage an



i mean, 'Arry?



Born 1925, began career Born 1912. Went to Eton A poet of his craft. Born An official at the Snook- Left school at 14 to work. Commentated on six. First commentary for the Commentated on sugby



HENRY LONGHURST

1972, died in 1978.



TED LOWE DAN MASKELL

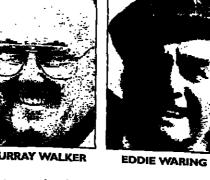
on Grevhound Express. and Oxford, served in in 1909, became a jour- er World Championships as a ball-boy at Queen's Olympics for the BBC, ut- BBC was from Silveron Greynound Express. and Oxford, served in in level, became a jour- served a served a served a served a served a served a served in 1948. Had his ail- Spawned countiess aptary for BBC in 1949, the war, BBC Cricket elor pad with EW as commentator when RAF squadron leader famous Colemanballs, ing hips replaced so he preciation societies. Finest moment: Muham- Correspondent 1963-72, Swanton after leaving Raymond Glendinning during the war. Never "Juantorena opens his could carry on commad All beating Fore- moved from television to Cambridge. Sunday was struck with laryn- missed a day's play at legs and shows his mentating - in order to petition to have him mad. All beating Fore- moved from seevision to canonings. Surface man. "Oh my God, I Test Match Special in Times Golf Correspon- gitis. Started Pot Black Wimbledon from 1929 class." Renowned coach be able to walk round the sacked. As famous for it's don't believe it! He's won early 70s, and com- dent for 21 years. "Golf in 1969. Retired last year to Andre Agassi's win in -among his successes pits. More bloomer-prone A Knockout. Managed the title back at the age mentated on many is the Esperanto of after 43 years of whise 1991. Died December was Lynn Davies, 1964 than most, but once Dewsbury in '40s, winof 32!" he roared. OBE Royal occasions. Most sport," he wrote. All over pering for England, but 1992, posthumously in-Olympic long jump gold said: "I don't make mis-ning two Challenge Cups in 1991, retired in '94. Not farmous Johnstonballs: the world golfers talk was brought back in the ducted into Internation - medallist. Leading anti- takes I make prophecies and two championships. always objective: "Get in "The bowler's Holding, the same language, spring for Seniors Pot al Tennis Hall Of Fame drug campaigner and that are proved wrong." there Frank!" he yelled the batsman's Willey." much of it nonsense." Black. Most famous last year. Catchphrases: president of Haringey Typical Walkerball: "Unwhen Bruno fought Best Johnstonballs: "Ray Renowned amateur who Loweball: "For those of "Oh I say", "Dream of a AC Died in 1991. Linford less I'm very much misMost celebrated line: when Bruno rought best ontstiences, hay realize the hung up his clubs when you watching in black backhand". His pauses Christie dedicated his taken - I'm very much "Poor lad," as Don Fox Tyson, Catchphrase; not langworth has just the hand white the blue is be-made him the Pinter of Olympic gold medal the mistaken!" OBE last year, infamously missed his snorts commentating next year to Pickering was 74 in October



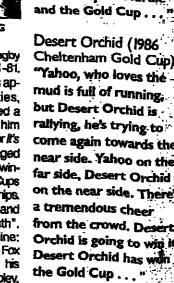


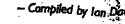
RON PICKERING

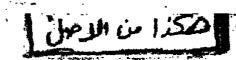
sports commentating. next year to Pickering. was 74 in October.



Catchphrases: "Up and under", "Early bath", conversion at Wembley.







19/PHOTO-SHOOT

THE INDEPENDENT SATURDAY 29 NOVEMBER 1997





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Sport's biggest secret society meet for annual mud fest

the forest trails, but they reckon at scale of this annual growling, sliding, bobble hat and mud fest. The Network Q RAC Rally is the biggest spectator event in British sport.

Yet it remains a world of mystery to those outside the exclusive if enormous circle, a peripheral activity still out of television's remote control and therefore beyond the comprehension of the armchair

Inroads have been made, of course, and the packaging moguls yearn for the day when they can squeeze it all into their small screen. The introduction of a "super special" stage, a Scaleatric-style, side-by-side McRae (pictured above), the even-

ly how many of them were out on an irrelevant side show, and, at Richard Burns, who finished fourth the circuits, in the parks, and along worst, It's a Knock-Out reincarnate. McRae missed out on the world

least two million. That figure should reduced to a compact disc. The erally acknowledged as the most of the old beast, the passing of the all-night vigils and, this year, the journeys to the Great North Roads that intimidated and often terrified rallying's greatest drivers.

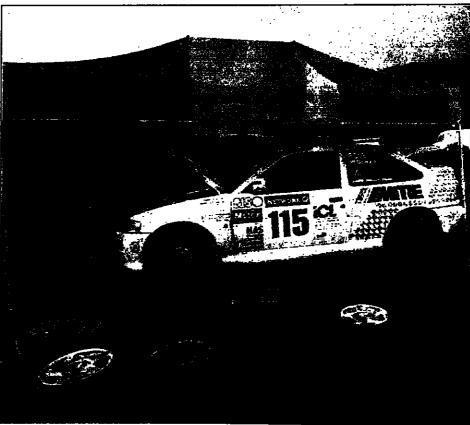
Yet even in its condensed format. the RAC Rally has provided the elements of challenge, drama and danger. Away from the artificial arenas of Sunday, or the "Mickey Mouse" stages as the drivers call them, deep in the forests of Wales, the demands took their toll, stretching the endurance of man and machine.

The stars of the forest tracks were two Britons, Subaru's Colin

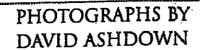
It is impossible to be sure precise- whizz round a short track is, at best, tual winner, and Mitsubishi's The long player rally has been championship by a point but is genthree years his junior, has the potential to become a genuine rival.

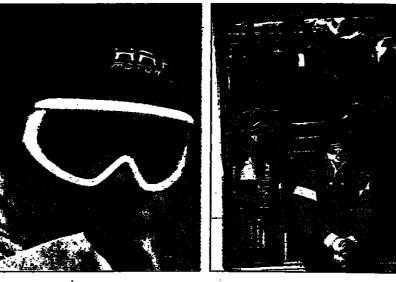
Their feats are unlikely to dominate conversation in the pubs and clubs of urban Britain, but deep in the forests they talk of little other than their specil, style and car control. It is the language of sport's largest secret society, a language they are content to keep to themselves. Copies of these photographs and any others by the Independent's sports photographers David Ashdown, Peter Jay and Robert Hallam - can be ordered by telephoning 0171-293-2534.

-Derick Allsop















ROWBOTTOM

ON SAYING SORRY WHEN YOU DON'T MEAN IT

Watching the president of ner, there is at least one loser tennis players have a range of is possible in defeat to praise bowing and screaming in her self to the world, shame on television this week. I thought: "Now that is what I call an apology."

While the performance lacked a dramatic climax - the ritual thrust of a samurai sword seemed the logical coup de théatre - there was no denying the fact that the man looked really sorry. He might even have been sorry.

Forgive the cynicism. Perhaps I have been involved in sport for too long.

Let me rephrase that. I have to bold up my hand for that lapse of taste. It was bad timing more than anything else, but I accept that it must have looked bad.

In the world of sport, apology now plays as large a part as psychology. For every win-

Defeated tennis players tential reproaches. seem to have a particularly hard time of it - perhaps because their failings are registered in bard statistics.

the tennis loser. The rules of the Tour demand that they make themselves available for media questions such as: "You double faulted at 40-30 and 2-5 down in the first. Just how important do you think that was in retrospect?" Or: "You only managed to get in 37 per cent of your first serves today. How do you explain that?"

Bowing and screaming in shame is not something that occurs at this juncture, although you could almost forgive such behaviour in the circumstances. Perhaps it is only fair that

Japan's ruined Yamaichi bank who is obliged to explain his or excuses available to them your opponent freely as long as fer players wide opportunities palms. Now you're looking inwhich matches the extent of po-

> "My backhand wasn't ment Like a limpet mine. grooving properly... she kept going wide to my forehand... I thought the court favoured There is no hiding place for her topspin." Or if all else fails, "I wasn't moving well," which pretty much covers everything

Athletes too have a rich store of excuses available for poor performances. Beaten in a sprint to the line? You haven't done your speed training yet. Lost touch on the ultimate lap? Your winter endurance work was affected by a virus. Even the old-fashioned stitch can be adduced as exhibits for the defence.

But the runner's ultimate standby resides in a simple

CRICKET

you finish by attaching these to develop their skills in the three little words to your state-

"He ran a better race... on the day." But on another day I will beat him into the ground, because everybody knows I am better and faster than he is fering you the benefit of the and he just got lucky today. Footbali managers also

have their favoured verbal formula. The phrase "not making any excuses" has been widely employed for years to good effect. "We were down to a skeleton squad beforehand, and ouce Mobbsy and Dobbsy went rifying sight than the gristy off, we were always going to struggle. But I'm not making any excuses..." Or a stylistic variation: "I don't like making excuses, but it was so slippery out there our lads should have phrase - "on the day." Thus it brought their toboggans..."

field of acting and, in some cases mime. After you have hacked over a forward just outside the box, the simulation of graceful diving actions may steer the referee towards of-

doubt. If the referee is having

none of it, however, you may

then switch into the mode

made popular in the late 1960s by Leeds United's archetypal hard man. Norman Hunter. Hunter's "aw shucks" grin was in its way a more truly terdeeds which preceded it. The whole performance was so consummate you could only think it had benefited from practice. "No Norman, a little more ex-

pressive with the body lan-

guage. That's right, hunch

I noted a darker variation

on the Hunter approach in a recent European Cup match when Feyenoord's Argentinian forward Cruz gave Manchester United's Gary Neville the most malevolent smile I think I have ever seen on a human face. At the time he was fulfilling

the referee's demand that he shake the full-back's hand after elbowing him in the eye. And as he stared into Neville's face, you could tell he really was sorry. He really had wanted to damage him more severely.

Saying sorry when you really don't mean it is not something that is restricted to the football field, of course. When it comes to doubletalk, a personal favourite is the statement released by Canada's Olympic which he had just taken part.

Apologies on the pitch of those shoulders, spread those 100 metres champion, Dono-Michael Johnson had pulled up half-way through this year's one \$1m (£590,000) sprint chalien him fi

ed. ignor

worshipp

and miss

lenge in Toronto. "I have tremendous respect for Michael's athletic ability." the statement read. "And I hope the injury he has sustained is not season-threat-

enine." Noble sentiments from a man who, the previous night, had grinningly called the Olympic 200m and 400m champion a "faker and a chicken." Johnson's demeanour when

the Canadian media put Bailey's comments to him was restrained. He did not bow, or scream. "Next question," he said. Now there was a man who was truly sorry - that he had ever agreed to the race in

Beaten, but our toys are still in playpen

No damage, no injuries and no one wanting to jump ship – the skipper of Merit Cup found some positives among the negatives of a slow second leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race.



GRANT DALTON

Everyone has a bad day at the beaten, but we haven't lost office. Jacques Villeneuve sight of the fact that the crew crashes and loses a race, Nick Faldo misses a putt and drops thrown at them and the boat thought there would be an a championship. We have can hold its own alongside any missed a couple of moves and a couple of decisions. We have heavy running conditions. We had a bad leg from Cape Town have the best navigator in the to Fremantle and came seventh

But, and there are several buts. The first thing is that nothing is broken. It may look as if around for additional sources of we have to pick up the pieces, but we haven t thrown our toys out of the playpen.

out of nine.

can handle anything that is of the others except in very world, although his ego has taken a severe battering. I see no

need to change anything. Yes, we are likely to look weather analysis, but we already have one of the foremost experts in Bob Rice. It will not hurt to talk to a few more people and

No time to rest for Bouscholte

again, but even worse for the skipper, Hans Bouscholte, and the crew of Brunel Sunergy is the knowledge that there are only 14 days before they have to set off again.

Ninth out of nine is not something to celebrate, especially as the second-leg winner, Swedish Match, had been tucked up in harbour for four days when the 35-year-old Bouscholte brought his Dutch boat into Fremantle after 19 days and 11 hours at sea on the break through and a great notorious Southern Ocean.

With only a small support team to help. Bouscholte will have to make use of every minute in port to make his boat ready for the third, 2.250 leg to Sydney which starts on 13 December.

"It is hard to bear sometimes when you don't have time to rest. no sightseeing, no holidays, even no time to visit some of the most

Bouscholte, who was also last on the first leg from Southampton to Cape Town.

bind the all-woman crew of EF Education, skippered by Chrismiles of racing and the girls kept pushing right to the end, hoisting their spinnaker as they entered the harbour. Earlier, as they approached the Fairway orange sun lit up the sky.

O'ADGE SUIT III UP THE WORLD RACE (second leg. 4,600 miles, Cape Town to Fremande): 1 Swedish Match (Swe) G Krantz 15 days 03th 45min 03sec, 2 Innovation Kwarner (Nor) K Frostad 15:22:02:35: 3 Tostaba (US) P 9tendorings 18:05:27:12: 4 SM; Cut (GB) L Smith 18:35:05:06; 5 5 Language (Swe) P Coyard 16:20:07:25: 6 Chessie Racing (US) M Flacher (17:15:147; 7 Merit Cup (Monaco) G Delfon 19:02:37:47; 8 EF Education (Swe) C Gallou 16:01:522; 9 Brunel Sunstroy (Neth) H Bouschotte

It is had enough being last beautiful places in the world," said

He finished 13.4 miles betine Guillou. Only 90 minutes separated the boats after 4,600 buoy, the sunrise began to

8 Er Education (Swe) Coulous Et in 1534; 9 Brunel Sunergy (Neth) H Bouscholte 19:11:24:39. Best 24hr run: Sitk Cut, 449.4 miles. Standinge: 1 Innovation (Naemer 207pts; 2 EF Language 197; 3 Sitk Cut 168; 4 Swedish Match 167; 5 Ment Cup 158; 6 Roshiba 157; 7 Chessie Racing 132, 8 EF Language 187; 8 Bound 18 pages 188.

the next, 2,250-mile leg round to Sydney will be a tricky one.

The story of this last leg is an absolute one-liner. We were in the wrong place. The safety gear was hardly taken out of its bag. The mainsail looks almost new. You can even still see the crease marks from when we took it out its delivery bag.

All sportsmen know that losses soon pass into history provided there are victories to take their place. I thought the pecking order would have been established by now.: It has not. I overall perspective to the race. There is not.

I think that will come in Auckland [after the fourth leg] and if we are not near the top by then we might have to think about radical change. But at the moment there is no Plan B. We don't feel we need one. We don't want to feel we need one.

Nor are we into sports psychology and morale-building. I don't believe in that kind of off, the rest of the crew would soon let me know. There have been no injuries and we will have the same crew for the next Indian hopes leg. No one has told me he wants to get off.

We now have two weeks to look at planning and strategy. You could almost feel the crew start to lift as soon as we finished the nightmare and could start: rain after Saurav Ganguly's 99 to look forward. We intend to come out strong, knowing that the points system has kept us in the hunt, although Kvaerner has a nice cushion now and Paul Cayard's EF Language will be during the lunch break, ended competitive again, despite the battering he says they took.

There are two highlights for me from the second leg. The first was the world record 449 miles in 24 hours by Lawrie Smith's Silk Cut. I see that as the biggest achievement and one which, given the way our boat is built, I would be hard pushed to match.

The second was running at 15 knots with a pod of whales: nearby. They were going faster. If I can cope with Merit Cup being beaten by a whale I can cope



stuff. If I was getting too hacked Australia's Mark Taylor is bowled by Shayne O'Connor at the Bellerive Oval in Hobart yesterday Photograph: Reuters

on the ebb

India's hopes of forcing a win in the second Test against Sri Lanka in Nagpur were hit by propelled the hosts to an impressive first-innings total of 485 all out at lunch on the third day.

Sri Lanka were unable to bat in reply as rain, which started play for the day, with another 1 to 273 for 5 at stumps on the four hours lost in addition to the second day. three on the second day.

ga 1-0-8-0; Jayasuriya 16-4-32-2; Atapettu 1-0-4-0 (w2).
Srl Lanica: "A Ranatunga, S T. Jayasuriya.
M S. Atapettu, R S. Mattanama, P A de Silva,
H P Tilaleanstre, 18 K. Lda Silva, C J U P W.
Vass, M Muzatinama, K R Pushpalumama, J K Silva.
Jamoinga; C. Mitchieu, ISA Land V M. Emme.

scored his first century of the summer before New Zealand progress in the third Test at the Bellerive Oval in Hobart, After Elliott, 114, and Greg Blewett, dismissed for a second time on

99 in Test cricket, had shared 197 runs for the second wicket, Australia collapsed from 238 for

Luck was on the secondwicket pair's side during the 257minute alliance as New Zealand squandered three chances two of them offered by Elliott in the space of seven deliveries.

Australia, resuming on 39 for 1 after five hours were lost on the first day, added 78 runs in the morning and 77 in the postlunch session. Elliott, the 26year old left-hander, was uncharacteristically restrained for most of the innings and Name: C Michiey (SA) and V K RamaSpent 70 minutes in the eightswamy (Ind).

Matthew Elliott yesterday ies before entering the nervous nineties. "It wasn't an atttractive hundred," he said. "It checked Australia's smooth was a slow pitch and I had to wait for the ball."

Australia slip after fine start

New Zealand enjoyed success in the sixth over of the morning when the left-arm swing bowler Shayne O'Connor bowled Mark Taylor, the captain, for 18. New Zealand's joy was short-lived, however. For the next four hours and 17 minutes Elliott and Blewett ground down an attack that was in total disarray until the left-

handed opener was dismissed. The part-time medium paceman Craig McMillan, with the second new ball, forced Elliott to push at a delivery and Bryan Young at first slip completed the

catch on the second attempt. Blewett was dominant. He drove exquisitely and pulled perilously for 15 boundaries before playing on to the medium paceman Simon Doull.

Doull then removed Steve Waugh as the right-hander chased a wide delivery and McMillan at point leaped overhead and took a good catch. Ricky Ponting batted for 34 minutes for his four runs but failed to take his bat out of the way of a Chris Cairns outswinger

and edged to Adam Parore. Australia had lost Elliott, Blewett and Steve Waugh in the space of 21 balls for eight runs.

apace of 21 Balls for eigh
Australe won toss
AUSTRALIA - First Innings
(Overnight 39 for 0)
M T Elliott of Young b McMillan
"M A Taylor b O'Comor
G S Blewett b Doul
M E Waugh not out......
S R Waugh o McMillan b Doul
R T Ponting c Pacirs b Ceitris
(1) A Healy not out....

Irea: S Davis (Aus) and R Titfin (Zim).

white coats and trilbies.

they looked like a sinister

version of the Red Cross

men who used to visit POW

camps. But life is tough for

Horne and his colleagues.

"There are a few jobs and

chores to perform, then we

have lunch and get on with

the racing. It's hard work."

Indeed. Jobs and chores.

And lunch. And then there's

all that racing. Poor petals.

racing, like its kissing

cousin, hunting, embodies

the British class system, the

jockeys virtually given class-

es in forelock-tugging, "I'm

sir or guv'nor," Walwyn

said. I don't have first-

name terms with my staff.

though I call them by their

first names." It's all about

standards, apparently. If

"Sir" became "Peter", the

entire fabric of society

would be rent asunder. No

More than most sports,

SPORT ON THE INTERNET

Best way to grapple with sumo

Last Saturday these pages featured former footballer-turned racehorse trainer. Mick Quinn. He was affectionately known as "Sumo" by fans because of his girth.

Also last week there was a report that the Hawaiian-born sumo wrestler Konishiki, "The Dump Truck, had had to retire as his knees would no longer support his great weight as it edged over 43 stone. But his popularity is such that he is the only sumo wrestler to have his own web site, where you find all his details and print-

off his handprint. The best site to keep you up to date with Japan's No 1 soort is Sumo Now!. This contains two columns, by the sumo experts Ken Coller and Michael Cohen, which have descriptive details of all the bouts. There is a glossary, descriptions of all the sumo rules and techniques, including all the methods of winning a bout, statistics with the wrestler's ranking, weight and height and

links to other sumo sites. The glossary is essential reading to understand the differences between the various rankings from a yokozuna at the top, to an ozeki, a seriwake, a komusubi and maegashira at the bottom

Konishiki ended his career as the first non-Japanese ozeki and there was a certain amount of controversy that he never gained the title of yokozuna. Channel 4's flirtation

with sumo lasted all too

Sumo Association has its own website in English which contains the latest results, a good beginner's guide and details of the greats.

ideas for that problem Christmas present, how about The Big Book of Sumo which comes with its own specially strengthened coffeetable. You can order via Atrium Books.

ADDRESSES

Konishild's Website http://www.lom.park. org/Japan/Konishiki/ index-e.html

Sumo World Magazine Magazine

atrium-books-japan_ Sports_Sumo.html

Hunting thugs and education in forelock-tugging – tales of the class system As Parliament shaped up of film later on that sug- surely be interested in buy- saboteur, while a more in-



CHRIS MAUME

SPORT ON TV

for vesterday's vote on blood sports, Carlton, in a rare fit of serious-mindedness, put on a televised debate. The Hunt, on Wednesday. At the start ing shown the error of its ways by a hound. You could tell it was absorbing the lesson by the way its head was nodding vigorously. Unless that was because its neck had been snapped.

The shot made you think that perhaps the programme was coming clean about its anti-hunting bias. but then you remembered that in some quarters such a sequence would have been seen as positive propaganda, pornography even, that in a few households up and down the country the scene would be huntswomen take the crea-

gested a more honest approach to hunting, and indeed even suggested a new sport. A deer, which had already been shot four times (I had a mental picthere was film of a fox be- ture of Rasputin who had to be poisoned, shot, beaten around the head, put in a sack and thrown into the and kind", was both inter-River Nevka before he finally succumbed) was being chased by hounds across a shallow river, when one of the hunters leapt up. grabbed its antiers and

pulled it under the water. Nice clean kill, that one. But instead of deerhunting, why not deer- And so it was. There was wrestling? (You could have teams of two and call it stagwrestling). And rather than of concord as of cock-fightset the hounds on the fox, why shouldn't one of the inducing a certain stiffening. ture on in hand-to-hand

ing up the rights, especial- triguing personal transfornaked as her opponent. The first speaker on the

programme, a lecturer in agriculture who got things off to a bizance beginning with the pronouncement that hunting is "good, clean rupted and cheered, and by the second speaker it was a could use to good effect. virtual free-for-all. You got the feeling it was going to be one of those debates in which every single speech gets heckled by one half of the audience and cheered to the rafters by the other half. about as much danger of the two sides reaching any kind

as the national sport. Among the foscinating panoply of characters there take great pleasure from it." There was another piece combat? Live TV would was a huntswoman turned

ing taking over from football

ly if Lady Braindead was as mation was suggested by a saboteur turned huntswoman. There was a lurch courser who looked like Lurch and a former member of the League Against Cruel Sports who had "broadened his views", which was a cuphemism for

a U-turn that politicians There was also Patrick Moore, who, to be a mite uncharitable, has been withered by age somewhat. A passionate anti, he was none the less a liability, repeating the same point, word for word, in his two contributions. He did, however, set up the line of the programme when he called hunting "the culture of the thug." "It's not thuggery", some Barboured saddo

replied. "Lots of my friends

gramme, 750,000 people had voted in a phone-in poll. "the most exclusive club in the country". "She's a bit kinky but This, anchorman Trevor McDonald told us with a she's a pretty nice filly," said trainer Peter Walwyn, which grandiose excess of ambi-

tion, made it "the vote the also promised more than politicians can't ignore". the programme could pos-At the Countryside Raisibly deliver. But the proly in the summer, bloodgramme centred on the work of the stewards, and sporters congregated in was a fascinating portrait of Hyde Park, to be addressed, among others, by Michael the privileged at play. To be Heseltine, and in The Eng- a steward you have to give lishman And His Horse the up lots of time for no monprevious night (C4), there ey, which means they tend was a nice shot of a girl - to be rolling in it. presumably a hunt supporter but Labourite -

There was Mark Home. who owns a printing firm, shouting "F--- off you basthe Hon David Sieff, of tard!" as Hezza took the Marks and Spencer fame, and Richard Hambro, stage. It was a tangential cameo in a programme whose name speaks for itwhose title hinted at far self. "You've got to have a more than it could possibly company that will let you deliver, being as it was a porhave the odd day off," Sieff trait of The Jockey Club, the said. Not too difficult if august body that adminis- you own the company. ters discipline in racing and

As they lurked in the By the end of the pro- is, as the programme put it, ring between races in their bad thing too, if you ask me.

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briefly and I always enioved Lyall Watson's considered commentary. The Official Japanese

And if you're short of

- Edward Abelson

Suma Now! http://www.sumoweb. com/sumonow/index Japanese Sumo Association http://www.sumo.or. ip/index_a.html

Atrium Books http://www.atrium.com/

Neil Back's England career has seen him fêted, dropped, ignored, recalled, hero-worshipped, cast aside, and misunderstood. And today he's coming back for more...

Neil Back squares up to the Springboks at Twickenham this afternoon having spent most of his career proving himself.

Chris Hewett talks to a natural-born fighter who may have finally found a sympathetic home for his unique talents.

almost exactly two years ago that South Africa, newly crowned as world champions, swaggered into Twickenham, kicked England's collective backside until the red rose turned red raw and made such an unholy mess of Andy Robinson's long-awaited return to the Test arena that the Bath flanker was back among the hasbeens before he could say Nelson Mandela.

Robinson later admitted, albeit through gritted teeth, that he had never felt so helpless on a rugby pitch. There were any number of reasons for his obvious discomfort - picked by Jack Rowell to play the role of a human catalyst, a link-man working in tandem with his outside half and centres, it took England precisely 38 minutes to

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"Big is Beautiful" brigade, the problem was as plain as the He had been overmatched.

Today, the Springboks come armed with an even more imposing physical specimen in the breakaway position. Andre Venter, the fast and fiery Free Stater whose notorious mean streak frequently leaves him on the wrong side of disciplinary tracks, is quite something: 6ft 5in of attitude and 17 stones of strop. Where does that leave Back and his Robboesque dimensions? In extremely bullish mood, that's where.

"I don't think the Springboks are any more physical than anyone else; certainly, I didn't feel alarmed or threatened by their size or strength during the Lions tour back in the summer. I've had this size thing around my neck for as long as I can remember but quite honestly, it doesn't even register any more.

"We're all more powerful and more dynamic - it's in-These are dangerous waters evitable in a professional enviand Neil Back knows it. It was ronment - and as far as I'm cocerned, the old 'bigger they are, the harder they fall' adage is more true today than ever be-

> "Look, they don't come Lomu, do they? Watch the tape of the Emerging England-New Zeal- and game at Huddersfield and you'll see little old me driving him backwards. To my more difficult defensive proposition. At first sight, there's nothing to him. But he steps out of more tackles than anyone I've ever seen. Don't make the mistake of thinking size is every-

Even so, the issue of size, or lack of it, has given Back more grief than the back rows of the world combined since he first revealed his penchant for pergive him the ball - but to the petual motion with a virtuoso display for England Under-21s in Romania eight years ago. In bloodied nose on Robbo's face. no particular order, he has been féted, dropped, ignored, Ruben Kruger, his opposite recalled, hero-worshipped, cast number, was five inches taller aside, mishandled and misunand three stones heavier. End derstood. He has been on the Bruno and spent longer in the cold than Captain Oates. If top-level sport is a roller-coastsponsored by Alton Towers.

"There have been plenty of low points, I suppose, and the lowest of the low was that

picking up a hamstring and even though I was disappointed at missing the rest of the tournament, I felt I was well and truly in business at England level. When the Boks arrived and Jack Rowell said he was looking to play a genuine open-side, I thought: 'It's got to be me because I'm the only one in the squad.' Then Robbo turned up out of the blue on the Wednesday night and played on the Saturday. That really hurt.

"There were flat times last season, too, especially when the Lions selectors announced their initial squad of 62 last season and my name wasn't there. I was convinced my chance had gone, so you can imagine how I felt when they picked me in the much bigger and stronger than 36 to travel. I was lying in bed when Alison, my fiancée, came in with the mail. When I realised they'd chosen me, I cried my eyes out. Honestly. The tears were streaming down my face. mind, Christian Cullen is a That's how much it meant to Back returned from the tour

feeling seven feet tall and with good reason. After years of being overlooked, often without a word of explanation, in favour of Peter Winterbottom, Ben Clarke, Steve Ojomoh, Robinson, Lawrence Dallaglio and, latterly, Richard Hill of Saracens, he had produced his finest rugby on the grand stage for coaches who genuinely valued the skills and commitment he brought to the cause. "It was wonderful to start the final Test In Jo'burg, but the midweek game against Free State in Bloemfontein was just as big a high," he says. "Tve never been stuff we produced that night."

Happily, the good vibes remain very much in evidence, coaching panel gave Hill the earnestly. nod for the first two legs of the current four-match SANZA se- has it absolutely right in my ries. "I wanted to play, of view. They're leaving no stone Springbok match in '95. I'd course, but I can handle disap- unturned in attempting to maxplayed in the first three World pointments when the coach is imise our chances of winning the and made me feel part of what I happen to think that we can



Small wonder: Neil Back has been described as too small so often 'it doesn't register any more' Photograph: David Ashdown

"This management set-up Cup games that summer before being up front with me and I next World Cup. They're pulling was going on. There was no lin- achieve a great deal as a unit. as big as they like, can't they?"

er experience, Back should be even though the new England know where I stand," said Back, in specialist expertise in every gering downside, no sense of We're all footballers with decent first director of coaching, has conceivable area and they're do-things happening behind my hands, but we're all grafters, ing things professionally. Yes, I back. was a bit down about not starting against Australia, but Clive alongside Richard and Lawrence Woodward gave me his reasons against the South Africans and

"As it turns out, I'm playing

too, willing to get down there among the studs and win some

50-50 ball. We're comfortable in

Brittle wants clarification over Sky deal

England's controversial £87.5m television deal with BSkyB has suffered a technical hitch but Twickenham yesterday insisted the show must go on.

Cliff Brittle, the Rugby Football Union management board chairman, has moved to allay fears that the plug could be pulled on live satellite coverage of England's Test match against New Zealand next week.

Sky bought exclusive live rights to all of England's home internationals over the next five years, yet Brittle is unhappy with some contract clauses. He is seeking clarification of the contract, but claims that Sky have rejected requests for immediate talks.

However, Brittle said: "The RFU would like to make it clear that it wishes to maintain a good relationship with its broadcast partner.

The RFU has no intention of doing anything other than to comply fully with its contractual obligations with regard to broadcasting forthcoming internationals."

Some RFU officials who negotiated and signed the deal last year, however, are no longer in power at Twickenham.

The RFU yesterday confirmed Phil Larder's appointment as full-time coaching adviser. Larder, the former Great Britain and England rugby league coach, will start his new job on Monday after helping the England coach, Clive Woodward, prepare for last weekend's Old Trafford Test against New Zealand and today's game against South Africa at Twickenham

The 52-year-old will work with players identified by Woodward, while also visiting clubs throughout the country and organising coaching courses.

Larder, whose post was rubber-stamped by the RFU management board yesterday, played rugby union for Loughborough University, Manchester and Sale before switching codes in 1968.

His league career featured haven but it was in coaching that he made his name

Larder, the Rugby League's also worked in league with Widnes, Keighley Congars and Sheffield Eagles, took England to the 1995 World Cup fipossession and comfortable with nal and saw Great Britain win each other, so the Boks can be eight of their 12 Tests during

Wales heed a warrior's words before All Blacks battle

Wales have attempted to tap into the indomitable spirit of a Falklands War veteran as part of their mental preparation for the Test against the All Blacks at Wembley today.

As Tim Glover reveals, nothing in sport is now left to chance.

Simon Weston, the Welsh guardsman who suffered horrific burns when his ship, the Sir Galahad was bombed by Argentinian fighters, dined with Wales at their botel in Buckinghamshire and addressed them on the subject of dealing with adversity. It is a theme that is central to a charity he runs called Weston Spirit.

"We weren't sure how the nlavers would react but it was spellbinding," a Welsh Rugby Union official said. "One of the things you learn in the army is translates to a team game, esnecially rugby."

Blacks and more recently they have taken some fearful hidings including a record 54-5 defeat in 1988. Few expect Wales to stop the rot today - indeed the the ball." joke doing the rounds in Wales switched to Lord's where the scoreboard would be better equipped to keep pace with the points - but there are signs that Kevin Bowring, the coach, and Terry Cobner, the manager, are beginning to get the balance

spect we seemed to have gone full circle," Cobner said. "Traabout caring for each other ditionally we had ball-winners New Zealand coach, said. is when Welsh rugby died. They and it's something that easily not users. Welsh backs are still among the best and could beat than England. They are well any opponent in a one-to-one. It is 43 years and 13 match-What we haven't been doing is es since Wales beat the All winning enough possession to put them in that position. We have made a fundamental

all the forwards are there to win That, of course, is the rub, is that the game has been for Wales are feeding a back line that looks as impressive as anything assembled in Britain. For the first time in a long time Wales have players who will have caused the All Blacks to think long and hard: for starters the half-backs Robert Howley,

"Welsh forwards saw them- the first time, and Neil Jenkins best team in the world," Hart flanker Gwyn Jones, a 25-yearselves as ball-handlers rather and the centres Allan Bateman than ball-winners and in this re- and Scott Gibbs are world class. The week before they were derstands the game I want to "This could be our most "Wales look more co-ordinated

> coached and maybe enjoying a resurgence." You would not expect Hart who, since his appointment two

change in that first and foremost same paddock as us." Even so, Hart is genuinely concerned about the welfare of Welsh rugby and can pinpoint the beginning of its demise.

years ago has won 19 Tests out of 20 (the only defeat came in South Africa when the series was already won) to say: "We are the best in the world and Wales have no right to be on the

playing against New Zealand for bly thought they were the third ed the captaincy to the Cardiff highest level."

comprehensively beaten by the difficult Test," John Hart, the All Blacks in Brisbane and that also lost players to rugby league but all that's finished now. I because we have a historic re-

> "I just wish the game had been at Cardiff Arms Park." In two years' time the All Blacks will be gracing the new £120m stadium in Cardiff for the next World Cup.

lationship.

Hart said he was not at all surprised that Bowring had promised there would be no repeat of England's confrontational approach to the haka.

"Both teams will line up on "They finished third in the the respective 10 metre lines." World Cup in 1987 and probassaid Bowring, who has entrust-

said. "But it was a false picture. old medical student. "He unplay and he's utterly courageous."

Jones took over the captaincy on a tour of the United States last summer and has hope Wales are on the way back carried on with bloodless victories over Romania and Tonga. This game though, in front of a crowd of 78,000, is a different ballgame.

"For us it's a double-edged sword playing against such an outstanding side," Jones said. Because you're looking for ways to improve your own game while measuring yourself against the best. We have experienced players who are full of confidence. Welsh rugby has benefited from the Lions' success and has given as the belief that we can perform at the

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three years, may become a career specialist, like JPR Williams, in sports injuries. "I can help injured players

Jones, who has had two on the psychological side as well shoulder operations in the last as with treatment and rehabilitation," he said.

Jones, perhaps more than most, empathised with Simon Weston's address.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK RUGBY LEAGUE

● I don't want to lose every game. I don't sit there and have any more enjoyment than the fans do. Peter Johnson, Everton chairman, on the barracking he has received. ● Everton is a house on fire, the walls are down and, if the blaze isn't put out soon, it will engulf the entire club. Alan Ball, formerly of Everton, after defeat to Aston Villa. ■ The training ground will not turn into Colditz Camp. Alan

I could get Spurs into the top six and into Europe. Uri Geller volunteers his services. All we asked is for some respect towards our culture. That kind of behaviour has no place on the field. John Hart, New Zealand coach, on England's reaction to the haka.

Sugar, Spurs chairman, on his new coach, Christian Gross.

The current structure of English rugby is laughable. don't think there is a country in the world in a worse position to generate a successful national side. Clive Woodward, England rugby union coach.

If we did it property, our Test players would play three or four Championship matches a season. David Graveney, England chairman of selectors, on his plan to withdraw Test players from county matches.

Keighley and Workington supported in fight against 'vultures'

have rallied around Keighley and Huddersfield to protect them from threats to expel should support them." them from the game.

defend them.

"We don't think that the fans weekend. of Keighley and Workington should be deprived of their well-supported Cougars are teams," said Fasda's chief ex- likely to have hundreds of fans ecutive, Bob Scott, after vesterday's meeting of the Salford. Workington are also Josh White, who are expected expects him to move by the end association. "Super League are capable of staging a demon- to contest the scrum-half posi- of next week. waiting like vultures to try to stration of their determination tion next season.

Clubs outside Super League grab these two clubs' share of to survive, despite also being in the Murdoch money and the the hands of an administrator for unanimous view was that we over a year.

The two clubs - plus the ap- tor, Mike Smith, who was re- Street fashion label. Joe Bloggs of your ability." parently doomed Prescot - are cently sacked from the board by have signed a £240,000 two-year facing expulsion at the meeting the administrator who has run of the Rugby League Council on the club for over a year but who a new kit and leisurewear. Wednesday, but their peers in remains in the forefront of the First and Second Division efforts to save the club, said that Association have pledged to an investor might take the club a lot of confidence in Salford and out of administration this

> Failing that, the outstandingly lobbying the Council meeting at

Salford have become the The former Keighley directifirst club to be backed by a High contract to provide the club with The Joe Bloggs chairman,

Shami Ahmed, said: "We've got we think they are going places. This is the kind of sport that relates to our street fashions." Among the first to wear the

new shirts were the new sign- in being linked with the player, ings, Martin Crompton and

"I was in the same sort of competition with Shaun Edwards at the London Broncos last season," White said. "It makes you perform to the best

London have made two more new signings from Australia, with the South Queensland pair of Steele Retchless and Matt Toshack joining their squad.

Warrington have turned down a cash offer from Wigan for Paul Sculthorpe, but, with Leeds and St Helens joining Wigan, London and Bradford his agent, David McKnight.

- Dave Hadfield

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

Cowboys may miss play-offs after Oilers strike in Dallas

An already troubled season for missed his first play because he the Dallas Cowboys became needed a muscle relaxant to redemonstrably worse on Thurs- lieve severe back spasms which day night when they lost at developed in the warm-up home to the Tennessee Oilers. made a poor start and was was The Cowboys's were beaten

27-14 in one of two Thanksgiving Day fixtures. It was their second defeat in five days, takes their severe danger of missing the playoffs for the first time in seven seacompeting beyond the regular pears sealed, but this latest de-

intercepted on his second and fifth pass attempt, and three times in all. Darryll Lewis claimed two of the interceprecord to 6-7 and puts them in tions and forced a fumble which was returned for a touchdown. Barry Sanders rushed for 167

sons. Even if his team is yards for the Detroit Lions as they beat the Chicago Bears season, the fate of the Cowboys 55-20 in the other Thanksgiving head coach Barry Switzer ap- Day game. Sanders became the first person to rush for more feat may hasten his departure. than 100 yards in 11 successive Troy Aikman - who nearly games in one season.



Bjorn Borg, who has renewed old rivalries on the senior tour

Photograph: Martin Spaven/The People

After years of turmoil a legend comes full circle

Bjorn Borg, the winner of five consecutive Wimbledon singles titles, is due to play in Britain next week for the first time since losing his crown to John McEnroe in 1981. Borg's participation in the ATP

Senior Tour of Champions event at the Royal Albert Hall revives piercing memories for his erstwhile agent and for his former coach.

Teeny-boppers at Wimbledon used to proffer their bras to Bjorn Borg. Nowadays he is in men's and women's underwear on Sloage Avenue. The Scandinavian scannes are among the remains of the Borg brand name empire.

"The underwear brand was one of the things I helped set up for him," recounted Peter Worth, Borg's former agent, "and it has gone from strength to strength.'

In a sense, Worth's business life has turned full circle since had thought he was left to sort out the about it for a crumpled contracts after Borg announced his retirement in 1983, aged 26,

As the managing director of the Quintus Group on the prise to us. His contracts were King's Road, Worth is the tournament chairman for next week's Honda Challenge at the to early retirement. We didn't Royal Albert Hall, where Borg is due to play for the first time in these islands since losing the Wimbledon singles title to John McEnroe in 1981.

The irony of the situation is not lost on Worth's sense of humour, although his demeanour on the occasion Borg informed him of his decision to leave the sport probably rivalled a Japanese stockbroker last Monday.

Worth, assigned by Mark McCormack's International Management Group to take, the next year alone. responsibility for Borg's affairs, six years. The unsuspecting enough of me," Worth said. "We agent and his family were on a two-week skiing holiday at Val d'Isère in France. One evening, when the family were sitting down to dinner at their hotel, Worth was called to the telephone. He was puzzled, having told his secretary not to give anyone his number.

It was Borg. "Peter," he said, "I've decided to quit playing the circuit. My last tournament will be Monte Carlo in April, but that's the last one."

Although Borg's refusal to commit himself to the required number of tour events in 1982 had resulted in the indignity of having to pre-qualify for tournaments, there had been no indication of early retirement.

"I don't understand, Bjorn," a shocked Worth said to his client. "You're only 26 and you've got at least another four years at the top."

"It doesn't matter," Borg underwear

replied, "Tve made my decision. I want you to talk with the others at IMG and take care of everything. But you're not to make any public announcements yet. We'll talk about that later. And remember, there's no use in trying to convince me to keep playing. I've made up my

The dialogue, which Worth acknowledges to be reasonably accurate, is taken from a book on Borg written by Lars Skarke, described on the jacket as a "firm friend". Skarke, who was IMG's Swedish representative. became a partner in the the illfated Bjorn Borg Design Group. Winner Loses All (Blake Publishing, 1993) is a lurid account of Borg's experiences away from the court.

Worth did endeavour to convince Borg to play on. "I spent a few months trying to persuade him." The response was always the same, "It's no use. I've made up my mind." The agent Borg's depar-

BY JOHN

said that he couple years, but I don't know about

that," Worth said. "It was a sursubject to his playing tennis. There were no clauses relating conceive that would happen."

Borg's career prize-money amounted to \$3,609,896 (£2,4m). In 1981 he had earned more than \$4m from advertisements and in 1982, in spite of a reduced playing schedule, his revenue from advertising was around \$3m. He had long-term agreements with Donnay rackets and Fila sportwear, with whom he put pinstripes back in fashion. He was told he would be sacrificing about \$4m over

Borg and Worth eventually I went mine. From '85 to '94 we had no contact at all. Now he

"I have no regrets. I had 10 great years with Mark McCormack. For some people it was business. For us it was excitement. Borg wasn't my only client." Among the others was Mats Wilander, Borg's successor as Sweden's leading player.

During what has been termed Borg's wilderness years. his personal life was often in greater turmoil than his business affairs. His first marriage, to Mariana Simionescu, the Rotennis player, manian foundered and they divorced (her settlement was reportedly \$15m).

Borg had a son, Robin, by Jannike Bjorling, a children's nurse, and later developed a relationship with Loredana Berte, an Italian rock singer. In 1989, a few months before he was due to marry Berte, Borg was rushed to hospital in Milan to have his stomach pumped. His explanation (food poisoning and a few sleeping pills) conspent the next two years deal- flicted with reports of a barbiing with the implications of turate overdose. Later that year

Borg's design company was declared bank-

ROBERTS 34-year-old Borg made an abortive comeback on the regular tour, encouraged by a British guru, "Professor" Ron Thatcher, and using a wooden Donnay against synthetic modern rackets, a catapult against Magnums. Loredana Berte,

> were divorced in 1993. The senior tour, co-ordinated as never before, has rejuvenated the 41-year-old Borg, who is scheduled to renew his rivahy with McEnroe in London next Friday afternoon.

who married Borg in 1989, at-

tempted suicide and the couple

"Bjorn is in very good shape right now, and he moves very well," observed Lennart Bergelin, the Swedish coach who shared Borg's greatest triumphs. "Of course, if you put and [Henri] Leconte before had worked with the Swede for parted company. "He had had him with an enthusiastic young- that. His movement and his rester of 20 years old it is very difhad been working together for ficult," Bergelin conceded, "but and he was really fast again, for nine years. He went his way and I'm sure he could give a lot of them a very good fight."

It gladdens Bergelin to see plays three or four events for me his former pupil back among contemporaries after courting



Clothes business: Bjorn Borg is a big name in upmarket Photograph: David Ashdown

ridicule in the early '90s. "He had stopped for eight years, and it is nearly impossible to come up to the top level," Bergelin said. "Now he plays at the right

Guided by Bergelin, Borg won the French Open title six times in addition to ruling Wimbledon for five years. Astonishingly, on three consecutive occasions the dedicated baseliner succeeded in mastering the speed of the Wimbledon courts directly after winning on the slow red clay of Paris.

Suspended for six months by the Swedish Tennis Association after misbehaving as a junior. thrown down steps after exasperating one of his early mentors, Borg developed prodigious powers of concentration and a topspin game honed by five or six hours of discipline per day on the practice court.

Bergelin was less surprised than most by the 1983 hiarus. Bjorn was a little bit tired during the last year of his tennis. He had done too much fighting. He came up when he was 15 or 16 years old and was all the time in the final or win-In 1991, the ming."

They have kept in touch. Both are involved with a German company, Ever-Court, specialising in tennis clinics. Bergelin travels extensively organising coaching for 30 to 60year-olds at Club Aldiana resorts. "I am 72 and a half," he said, intercepting the question. "I have played tennis all my life. so I keep on."

He expressed similar sentiments concerning Borg, "He's a tennis player. This is where he belongs. It is his life, what he does best, so why shouldn't he continue when he has the chance to do it?"

The view was reinforced when Bergelin visited last week's senior tour event in Frankfurt. "I didn't believe he could play such good tennis. He beat [Johan] Kriek in the final nearly 42 years old. You will see the way he moves, quite fan-

Borg and Bergelin were some team. "We are quite near in the way of thinking," Bergelin said. Not to mention the way of superstitions, the string section of finely tuned rackets that went ping in the night the same old route to Wimbledon - even if it was the long way round - and Borg's not shaving for the duration of the tournament. "There is something in all that, you know," Bergelin d laughed. "It's stupid... but why got?"

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If nostalgia is contagious, the Albert Hall will be buzzing with veterans of teeny-bopper hysteria. "I think some people have forgotten what it was like." Peter Worth mused. "It was like the Beatles." For sure, they loved him, yeah, yeah, yeah.

THE BORG YEARS: FIVE CLASSIC WIMBLEDON VICTORIES

Bjorn Borg won the Wimbledon men's singles championship for five consecutive years (1976-80) and was unbeaten at the All England Club in 41 matches between I July 1975, when he lost to Arthur Ashe in the quarter-finals, and 4 july 1981, when he was relieved of the title by John McEnroe in the final, 4-6, 7-6 (7-1), 7-6 (7-4), 6-4. John Roberts reviews a selection of some of the finest moments of Borg's reign.



1976

Borg defeated llie Nastase, 6-4, 6-2, 9-7 in the final.

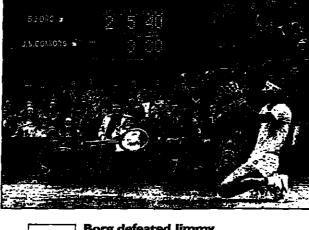
Borg's straight-sets victory against Nastase was the culmination of two weeks' domination of Wimbledon's grass courts, which were supposed to be too fast for the young Swede's baseline game. Seeded No 4, Borg approached the championships in his customary fashion, with two weeks' practice to adjust after months on the slow day. Nastase, the No 3 seed, suffered along with the rest, starting with Britain's David Lloyd (6-3, 6-3, 6-1), as Borgs tour de force began with seven wins without the loss of a set. The Swede's other victims were Marty Riessen, Colin Dibley, Brian Gottfried, Guillermo Vilas and Roscoe Tanner.



shots were intercepted and the outcome was

in doubt until the concluding shot.

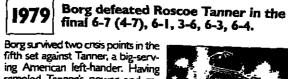




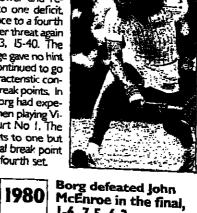
Borg defeated Jimmy Connors in the final, 6-2, 6-2, 6-3.

Connors once vowed to trail Borg to the ends of the earth, so strong was his determination to beat the Swede. The American came close in the 1977 final, Borg winning 6-4 in the fifth set, but was further away than ever in 1978. The biggest threat to Borg's hat-trick of titles came on the opening day. With the Centre Court slick, Borg faced the punishing serves of Victor Amaya, an imposing American left-hander. Amaya led by two sets to one and had a point for 4-1 in the fourth set. Borg prevailed.

Photographs 1976, 1977, 1979 and 1980: Alisport 1978: Peter Cook/ Sunday Mirror



sampled Tanner's power and retrieved a two sets to one deficit. Borg found his advance to a fourth consecutive title under threat again when serving at 4-3, 15-40. The Swede's body language gave no hint. of concern and he continued to go for his shots with characteristic confidence, erasing the break points. In the second round, Borg had experienced problems when playing Vijay Armritraj on Court No 1. The Indian led by two sets to one but was denied on several break point opportunities in the fourth set



1-6, 7-5, 6-3, 6-7 (16-18), 8-6,

The tie-break which decided the fourth set. is celebrated as one of the most exciting passages in the history of the sport. During the 20-minute cameo, Borg had five championship points and saved st. set points as McEnroe fought to level the contest. On the 34th point. Borg attempted a drop volley off a hard, topspin McEnroe return, and the ball fell off his racket. Borg subsequently lost the opening two points of the fifth set before banishing any doubts at 0-30 and winning all but one of his remaining service points to secure his fifth, and last, Wimbledon championship.

FACT FILE Born: Sodertalje, Sweden, 6 june 1956.

Lives: Stockholm.

Height: 5ft Ilin.

Weight: ||st 7lb.

Plays: Right-handed. Turned pro: 1973. Highest world ranking: No i (23 Aug 1977). Career prize-money: \$3,609,896 when first retired from the Tour in 1983. Singles titles: 62 Singles finals: 88. Doubles titles: 4 Doubles finals: 8. Grand Starn singles titles: il. Grand Slam record Australian Open sineles: Third round 1974 (only year played). Singles won/lost record: |-| French Open singles 6 (1974-75, 1978-81). Singles won/lost record: 49-2. Wimbledon singles titles: 5 (1976-80). Singles won/lost record: 51-4. United States Open finalist: 4 (1976, 78, 80, 81), Singles won/lost record: 40-9,

SNOOKER

Respect but no respite as Hendry takes

on Stevens

Stephen Hendry took nothing

for granted yesterday when he

lined up against Matthew

Stevens, the lowest ranked of

the UK Championship semi-

Hendry, in his own words, is

close to reproducing his best

form but refused to treat

before and Matthew beat me

5-1 in the Grand Prix last sea-

son," the defending champion

said after his 9-5 success over

Alan McManus in the Preston

"It's his second semi-final in

a row, so he can certainly play

a bit," Hendry said. "I know that

if I drop my standards, he's well

capable of getting through to

Hendry maintained his stan-

dard to such an extent that he

led 6-2 after the opening session,

the 20-year-old Stevens getting

a taste of his own medicine fol-

lowing his successive 9-1 victo-

ries over Mark Williams and

The Carmarthen player only

prevented a possible whitewash

by winning the last two frames

of the session helped by breaks

And in order to avert a last-

four disappointment for the

second ranking tournament

running, Stevens needed seven

of the remaining nine frames.

Martin Dziewialtowski.

the final."

of 83 and 97.

tournament on Thursday.

"We've only played once

Stevens with disdain.

TENNIS: DAVIS CUP FINAL

Sampras limps off as United States trail Sweden

Sweden, carried by the home crowd in Gothenburg and favoured fortune, opened a 2-0 advantage and are poised to defeat the United States in the Davis Cup final yesterday.

Jonas Bjorkman turned his match around in the third set to beat Michael Chang 7-5, 1-6, 6-3, 6-3. The American cause suffered a serious blow when the world No I, Pete Sampras, was forced to limp off court with a pulled calf when his singles match against Magnus Larsson stood at one-set all

Bjorkman, playing some solid tennis, broke Chang's serve three times in the final set and converted his second match point to win in two hours, 53 minutes.

"It's incredible," Bjorkman said. "It makes all the training worthwhile."

Bjorkman, who has risen from No 69 to No 4 in the world this year, also beat Chang in their last meeting at the ATP Tour Championship in Hanover, Germany, earlier this month. He said yesterday's victory was his biggest in the Davis Cup. He was only a substitute last year but he has carried Swe-

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-15:

den's team this year. Chang said he was disappointed to let the team down. "I wasn't able to win the crucial points. It's always important to get off to a good start and I wasn't able to do that today," he

longer than some two-set matches, as all but three games went their delight when Chang, No. were some spectacular rallies and winner off a wrong foot.



Jonas Bjorkman returns serve on his way to victory over Michael Chang in yesterday's opening singles match in the Davis Cup final in Gothenburg

Photograph: Peter Müller/Reuters

The first set lasted 70 minutes, in the Scandinavium hall was to trail 6-5. That game includ-The sell-out crowd of 11,000 the court from the crowd.

Bjorkman used his chance the American recovered quickto one or more deuces. There 3 in the world, dropped his serve ly to break serve for a 2-0 lead and rolled through the second extraordinary points, such as ed a double fault perhaps set in just 26 minutes. Changled when an air-borne Chang hit a caused by one of the paper 3-1 in the third set and was one when the match turned around.

noisily partisan, and showed and served out the long set, but fast indoor carpet near the net but still recovered to win the tied the score at 3-3.

"That was a big turnplanes occasionally hurled on to point away from a 4-2 lead around," Bjorkman said. without problems, hitting two "When I got the break back, I service winners in a row.

Bjorkman slipped on the had to feel that I was in the match again."

Chang agreed. "It was a point. Chang then went on to pretty important point. It was drop his serve and Bjorkman the turning point of the match probably," he said.

The Swede served out the set

other. Serving to stay in the into the net. match. Chang had a double fault that made it 30-30. A volley by Bjorkman gave the Swede his

exchange of service breaks and other and Chang dropped the Bjorkman took a 4-3 lead on an-match when he hit a volley

The doubles are scheduled for today and reverse singles are due to be played on Sunday, but first match point, but he wast- there must be a doubt over

The fourth started with an A forehand winner set up an-

That scenario looks unlikely against a player improving with every match and who is unbeaten since losing to Ronnie O'Sullivan in the 1993 UK final. ed it by hitting a forehand long. whether Sampras will play.

However, Hendry needed to stay awake unlike a spectator during his match against Mc-Manus. Frame 10 was interrupted by a snoring fan for whom the comfy chairs and warmth inside the venue proved too much to resist.

One minute the mystery man was watching Hendry take a 6-3 lead, the next he was snoring soundly forcing the match to be halted for several minutes.

Both players and the Dutch referee Jan Verhaas broke down laughing. But McManus was clearly affected and m would have no problem with include representatives from all i his next shot. He was still grinseven regions, two as yet ning as Hendry eventually The crucial question, as unnamed senior athletes and managed to take the frame on

"It wasn't a compliment to money generated by television Amateur Athletic Association ITN and managing director of our snooker, that's for sure," BBC network television, Ron- Hendry said. "It was just one of it likely to come from the Sports would fit into any new structure. nie Kells, the retiring group those things that happen from Council or the National Lottery. Animosity between the AAA chief executive of Ulster Bank, time to time. Alan was clearly He accepted the sport as a and the BAF was a major fac- and Karena Vleck, of the affected by what happened

BASKETBALL

England look to ride luck against Spain

The England coach, Laszlo back towards financial Nemeth, compares tonight's health. Mike Rowbottom, European Championship clash our Athletics with Spain at the Plymouth Correspondent, hears Pavilions to a trip to the c

"We have so little time together, every game is a gamble as to how we'll play," he said.

players are in buoyant mood for will be determined in the day responsibilities of the BAF. the second game in their semi-course of the next year by a final round group, even against 14-strong steering group which the former Olympic silver medallists, after winning 72-64 in Denmark on Wednesday.

"Any away win is priceless," said Nemeth. "The Danes are dangerous opponents, especially at home in front of a couple of thousand noisy fans."

Nemeth also emphasised the value of the practice game against Germany 48 hours earlier, in which the former Los Angeles Laker Steve Bucknall "It was an exceptionally intelligent performance. He proved his class," said Nemeth.

Nemeth knows his side still face The highly talented Stafforda far greater test than against shire side should win both. Denmark. "Spain are one of the fastest teams in Europe - five : ards.

Budweiser league Leopards will face England in Portsmouth : afternoon and will also be lookto Nottingham to play Beeston withdrawal by scheduled opponents Croatia from the friendly international.

Chataway and Moorcroft begin looking to the future

British athletics has enlisted the help of one of its heroes of the 1950's as it takes a first step

the latest plans.

has been set up under the

represented Britain at the 1952 and 1956 Olympics, will join Dave Moorcroft - the chief executive of the now insolvent British Athletic Federation - in an extensive consultation with all parts of the sport.

The group will be set up out to tender. receive £300,000 of funding from the UK Sports Council it Nevertheless, Nemeth's The future of British athletics will also take over the day-to-

The chairman of the Civil athletics administration takes, sport's commercial side.

Aviation Authority, who it is likely to be a less centralised and bureaucratic creature.

"The BAF has tried to be too things to too many people," Moorcroft said. He hinted strongly that the promotion and organisation of Britain's televised meetings would be put

as UK Athletics '98, which will separate the events side of it. It's generally agreed that there are better agencies for delivering certain parts of the sport."

A spokesman for the Although Moorcroft is be- administrators currently oring careful not to upset factions dering BAF's finances would within the sport by pre-judging neither confirm nor deny that chairmanship of Sir Chris any issues, it seems clear that there had been offers from whatever new form a British outside agencies to run the

There are rumours, am, so I'm sure the sport must however, that several have al- be"-but said there was already ready indicated interest, in- general agreement over the cluding Mark McCormack's need to implement a registra-International Management tion scheme, something long Group, and Alan Pascoe resisted by the grass roots of the

One rumour suggested that had been offered.

Moorcroft stressed that the new body would aim to base it-

a sum of £2.5m had been basis, rather than delivering changes." that," he added.

self upon secure funding inde- Moorcroft acknowledged, is how three external members - Sir the pink to go 7-3 up. pendent of the vicissitudes of the powerful English region - the Paul Fox, a former chairman of and sponsorship, with more of has reserves of close to £2m whole was still confused - "I tor in the latter's downfall.

"Athletics is facing its biggest test for many, many years," Moorcroft said. "The changes made in re-

cent years have been made at the edges of the sport. Now we will have to see whether there "If this is set up on a regional is a will to make fundamental

The steering group will also solicitors Farrers and Co.

more than me."

Cannock can bounce back

earned particular praise for leaders, who last Sunday suf- went down 4-3. both his assists good defence. fered an enormous blow to they were thrashed 6-1 by Canterbury, have home games this Tonight, England can take : weekend against Guildford some comfort from the ab- : (League) today and Old Loughsence of Barcelona's injured 7ft tonians (Cup) tomorrow to get 2in centre, Roberto Duenas, but their season back on course.

The Cup holders, Teddington, no longer interested in times faster than London Leop- this year's Cup competition. play the League Champions, too many goals this season and although last week it looked - Richard Taylor much improved at times against his country's trip to Argentina.

Cannock, the Premier League Old Loughtonians, they still

The return of the St George's their hopes for the season when schoolboy and England Under-21 midfielder, Danny Hayden, should boost their chances, as might their mid-week indoor 8-1 win against Maidenhead in the South Qualifier.

Southgate, who in spite of their defeat at Reading last weekend cling on to second place above the Berkshire side and East Grinstead on goal difference, will be without their first choice goalkeepers when Reading, at Reeds School this they entertain Old Loughtonians today and for their Cup trip Their defence has been shipping tomorrow. Giles Cadman is injured and the South African Gregor Maier has departed for

Chelmsford and Surbiton are more fortunate with their key South Africans, who play today before flying to Argentina.

Old Cranleighans or Spalding will break new ground after their fifth round EHA Cup encounter tomorrow at Thames Ditton with the winners going into the quarter-finals for the first time. The odds will favour the Old Boys, who have already passed the half-century of goals in their eight League games this season and lead the ESL Hampshire/Surrey League by

six points. • Stellenbosch University. South Africa's current Women's National League Champions, start a four-match tour tomorrow at Witney. - Bill Colwill

O'Hern picks Montgomerie collects again up lead role

The qualifier Nick O'Hern, forced to carry his own bag during the first round, was the unexpected leader after the second round of the Australian Open in the 18th at Valderrama in his vi-Melbourne. After hastily enlisting his wife, Alana, as a cad-nie Walker Player of the Year die, the West Australian shot a trophy for the third year running. six-under-par 66 to finish the day 11-under on 133.

Britain's Lee Westwood also shot 66 to finish the day one stroke off the pace, while the Hassan Trophy and the inworld No 1, Greg Norman. fired a 67 for 135.

The overnight leader, Peter Lonard, endured a miserable day to finish seven shots off the pace. The Australian Masters champion shot a 77 to follow his course record 63 on the open-

Colin Montgomerie picking up a cheque or an award. Yesterday, having retained the Shot of the Year title for his tee shot at

tal singles, he received the John-On the course, since being crowned the European No1 for the fifth time, Montgomerie has earned \$300,000 in winning dividual event at the World

ners-up. He is not finished. The house in Surrey he bought in the summer could rescoops the \$2m on offer in his last two events before a two-month break. This week he defends his

while in the the New Year are the two previous outings. "I went Andersen Consulting World out just to enjoy it but I play my Championship finals.

nemesis. Ernie Els, in his Ari- major championship, the one inzona semi-final. Els has twice gredient missing from his CV. beaten the Scot at the US Open is still his biggest challenge. and in the World Match Play. So Montgomerie's play-off win over the South African at Sun City last year was highly significant. "It was huge," he said.

Cup, where Scotland were run-Woods and Greg Norman are an Irish Open. at the top of the tree. He will World Cup individual with him in the field."

Montgomerie had finished

Hardly a day goes by without Million Dollar title at Sun City, 11th out of 12 at Sun City in his best golf when I am relaxed." he Montgomerie faces his said. Trying to be relaxed at a

> "It's a Catch-22, isn't it? I have put importance on majors by arranging my schedule for next year around them, but I think in the past someone like [Nick] Faldo "I have earned his respect has put too much pressure on the and that is important to me. Al- majors. I need to go into them though he is younger, he, Tiger as if they were a Slaley Hall Gr

"Now I know I don't need be looking for me now as I look to play at 100 per cent. I can win ceive further investment if he for him. It was nice to win the a major with 85 per cent of my game. Knowing that should help me to relax."

Andy Farrell

SPORTING DIGEST

American football NPL: Detroit 55 Chicago 20: Della 14 Terr

Baskethall NBA: Indiana 106 Vancouver 85.

من التيمير قبل مخيسر

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Boxing Boxing
Nasem Hamed's defence of the
World Boxing Organisation featherweight championship against Kevin
Kelley in New York's Madison Square
Garden on 19 December will not be
affected by the courts. A dispute between Hamed's promoter Frank Warren and his rival, Don King, triggered
legal proceedings, but these have
been resolved.

Johrny Nelson, of Sheffield, has been Johnny Nelson, of Sheffield, has been spared the trip to Chemobyl to defend his European crussorveight title. The bout against Alexander Gurov has been awarded from the site of the 1986 nuclear diseaster in Ukraine to Grande Synthe; hear Dunkirk, on the same 16 December date.

Susser may be without their pace bowier Paul Jervis for the start of the season after he ruptured an Achilles tendon while playing in New Zealand.

Jarvis, 32, hurt in a fielding accident while playing in Wellington, will be in plaster for five weeks and then faces at least two months rehabilitation. at least two months rehabilitation. The Warwickshire pace bowler Michael Bell is considering appealing to Lords to downgrade his registration. The 30-year-old is still a List One (Contested) player after stalling over a new one-year contract at Eogheston. Bell may leak the England and Wales Cricket Board to make him a List Two player to give him the option of being able to join any county.

to join any county.

Kent have re-appointed their wicketkeeper Steve Marsh as captain for
1998. Marsh, 35, led the county for the
first time this summer, guiding them to
the runners-up spot in the county
championship, Sunday League and the
Benson and Hedges Cup.

Benson and neoges cup.
Shaun Policick scored his maiden
first-class century yesterday for South
Africa as the tourists gained the
upper hand in their match against
Western Australia in Perth Policick was
dismissed for 100 in South Africa's first
tentions treat of 468 before the home dismissed for 100 in South Airce and inhibiting total of 468 before the home side fought back to farish 117 for 1 at close on the second day.
TOUR MATCH (Perth, second day of the four! South Africa 468 (G Kirsten 201, S M

Polock 100, P. L. Syrncox 54; Western Australia 107 for 1 (M. E. Hussey 58no).
SHEFFELD SHIELD (Second day of four); Stellboarce South Australe 452 (D. Fitzperald 81, D. S. Webber 69, B. Young 68, J. D. Siddom 60;; Victoria M. 4 for 2 (D. M. Jones 68no, L. Harper 55), Brisberne: Barmania 207 (D. J. Marsh 82no; S. Muller 5-73) and 12 for 2; Queensland 237 (J. P. Mahar 71).
SUPERSPORT SERIES (First day of four unless stated) Derbers, Notal v Eastern Province (no play rain). Johannesburg: Gautang 89 (C. F. Craven 5-29); Free State 5 for (C. Castarion: Boland 100 (P. S. do Villera 4-35, M. J. R. Rindel 4-17); Northern 41 for 4. Kimberley (second day); Border 278; Griqualand West 207 (L. Bostrain 77).

Guy Goosen has accepted a last-mirute invitation to compete in the UPS Christmas Pussance at the Clympia Show Jumping Champi-onships on 19 December. Goosen and his mount, Segrat, will be aiming for their third consecutive victory in this consecutive.

Football Perugia have freed their former coach Glovanni Galacine from his contract with the club and cleared the way for him to take over at the Serie A club Napoli after he agreed to terms on

ALSTRALLAN UPDR CHAMPONSHIP (Mebourne), Leading second round scores (Aus unless stated): 133 N O'rlem 67 68, 134 L Westwood (33) 68 61, 136 N Alvens 68 57, 136 S Parinting 67 69; S Allen 68 70, 137 P Michelson (US) 69 62, 138 S Leaney 68 77, 138 A Collent (GE) 65 72; S Apolleby 69 70; P Devenport (AZ) 69 70, 140 C Parry 70 70; R Dermon (US) 68 72; P Lonard 63 77, 141 G Evens (GE) 70 71; P Serior 68 73. State (GB) 70 71; P Senior 85 73.

ZHIBBABNE OPEN (Finance) Leading second round scores (SA unless stated): 131 D Fichard 57 64 132 J 15(ngsten 65 62 71.38 M Musless 66 70; M McAkity (Zim) 68 68. 137 B Pappas 70 67; W Coetsee 69 69; C Whitelaw 58 69, 138 A Cruss 70 68, 139 D van Stadim 71 68, 140 B van Wutren 70 70; K Shone 71 68; B Desion 70 70; B Vaughen 71 69; M Homer 71 69; M Homer 71 69; M Coetsen 70 70; G Vaughen 71 69; M Homer 71

68; 6 Devisor 70 70; 8 Vaughen 71 69; N Homen? 71 68
CASIO WORLD OPEN (Interior, Jepen) Leading second-round scores (Jepen unless stated); 135 N Czald 67 68; 137 M Kresi-she 68 68; 138 R Gibson (Carl) 71 67; M Czald 67 71; 139 B Watts (US) 70 69; H Myesse 69 70; T Ozald 68 7; 140 H Meshtal 72 66; K Hosolcaws 70 70; K Picalbort 69; 7; 141 T Manusers 79 69; T Fuluzious 72 69; Zhang Lian Wei (20) 72 69; T Husbort 170; T Watts 70; T Nickelfort 71, 70; F Furik (US) 71 70; H Nickelfort 71, 70; F Furik (US) 71 70; T Nickelfort 70; T R Kasregishi 70 71; T Nickersura 69 72; C Smith (US) 57 74.

Ice hockey

Ice skating Ice skating

NHK TROPHY CHAMPIONS SERIES
(Negaro, Japan) Short programma:
Women: 1 M Butyrikaya (Flus) 0.5 factored
placements; 2 Chen Lui (Ch) 10; 3 T Szewczenico (Ger) 15. Men: 1 I Nulk (Flus) 0.5; 2

D Hollender (US) 10; 3 T Honda (Japan) 15.
Pales: 1 J Meno and T Send (US) 0.5; 2

Kazakova and A Driffriev (Flus) 10; 3 Shen
Xue and Zhao Hurgho (Ch) 15. Ice dance
(after compulsory and original dances):
1 O Grishuk and E Pistov (Rus) 10; 2 S-L

Bourne and V Krastz (Can) 20; 3 B PusaiPol and M Mangegio (ff) 3.0.

Leeds have bestern off competition from Bradford, Huddersfield and Hun-slet to sign 16-year-old Andrew Kirk, a 6tt, 15st centre from the Leeds am-abour club Milford. Rugby Union

Rugby Union:

Eric Miler has become the third Lion to pull out of relands geme with Censcia at Lansdowne Road tomorrow. The Leicester No 8 has been struggling with ankle ligament derrage and finally had to admit defeat yesterday, Johing fellow Lions Keith Wood and Jeremy Davidson on the sidelines.

RELAND (v. Canada, Lansdowne Road. IRELAND (v Canada, Lenadowne Road, tomorrow): K Nowlan (St Merys); D Hickie (St Merys), R Henderson (Masps).

B McCall (London Irish), K Magga (Bristol); E Etwood (Galveglans), C McCarlanese (St Marys); N Popplayeril (Newcastie, capt), R Needale (Newcastie), P Waltece (Sarsoers), P Johns (Saracers), M O'Kelly (London Irish), D Ersikine (Sale), V Costello (St Marys), K Dateson (London Irish), Bristoneoments: D Humphrays (London Irish), N Hogen (London Irish), E Halvey (Shannon), J Curyallogham (Bellymena), R Conrigen (Cayyatones), A Clarke (Northampton), CANADA: J Stewart: J Pagasno, D

очь онеприять до CANADA: J Stewart; J Pageno, D Lougheed, R Toews, W Stanley, G Rees (capt), J Graf, R Snow, M Cardinal, R Bloe, J Tait, M James, M Schmid, J Hutchinson, A Charron. Replacements: В Ross, R Card, A Heely, C McKenzie, E Evans, K Morgan. Card, A Heely, C McNertze, E Production Morgan.

SOUTH WEST UNDER-21 TEAM (v New Zealand Under-21, Gloucester, Tuee-day): J Feblan (Exetar): M Horncastle (Wasse), J Envers (Bath), J Pritchard (Bath), R Jewel (Gloucester); J Mertin (Southempton University, P Knight (Gloucester): V Hartland (Gloucester): P Knight (Gloucester): V Hartland (Gloucester): C Hobbisson (Bristol University, capt), S Meson (Bristol), W James (Bath), E Mallistt (Bristol University), R Bader (Exetar), A Hazel (Gloucester), J Browning (Bristol).

77-16, 15-13, 14-17, 9-15, 15-8 in the final of the Oatar International tournament Swimming

The international Amateur Swimming Faderation armounced yesterday that Barcelona and the Japanese city, Fukuoka, have applied to stage the world championships in 2001. A decision will be made next January in Perth, Australia.

DAVIS CUP Final (Gothenburg): Sweden lead United States 2-0 (J Bjorkman bt M Cheng 7-3 1-66-3-6-3; M Lareson bt P Samp-ras 3-6 7-6 2-1, rst Injurad). South with Under-2.1 I PAM (v) New Zealand Under-2.1 (Sioucestax, Tues-day): J Febban (Exista); N Horncastle (Naspa), J Ewens (Bath), R Jewel (Gloucestar); J Mertin (Bouthampton University), P Knight (Gloucestar): J Mertin (Southampton University), P Knight (Gloucestar): J Mertin (Gloucestar): J Mertin (Gloucestar): J Mertin (Gloucestar): J Mertin (Gloucestar): J Mertin (Gloucestar): J Mertin (Gloucestar): J Mertin (Gloucestar): J Mertin (Gloucestar): J Mertin (Gloucestar): J Mertin (Gloucestar): J Mertin (Gloucestar): J Mertin (Gloucestar): J Mertin (Gloucestar): J Browning (Bristo).

Squash

Joristinon Power, of Canada, yesterday became the first North American player to win a Super Series tournament, defeating the Scot Pster Nicol. TODAY'S NUMBER

675

The amount (in pounds sterling) that referees who normally officiate in Span-ish footballs Third Division will receive per match this weekend for taking charge of games in the First Division, while top referees stage strike action in protest at the abuse they receive from players and coaches. Third Division referees normally receive only £85 per game.

The Hall of Fame's a farce – but I'd be in if my name was Gaffé



THE GAFFER **TAPES**

Hall of Fame? Hall of Shame "Any Hall of Fame that won't Council to change the name of managers were clearly good for go. I'm not against a bit of fun, some of the names they chose to put in this glorified wax-works. Peke, a fair player but he Ron. My playing days speak in Bin that wasn't en in 1966 - or 1962 when Brazil showed they could win the World Cup without him. world Cup without him.

Cruyff, another bottler, didn't go to Argentina because he didn't like their government.

The supplied is their government and two appearances for the maybe I shouldn't be surprised. These people don't have a meant something But that's characteristic they just No wonder he turned down those English jobs while Mag-gie was in charge. Puskas, I've There was the XY formas, are just as bad. since pictures of him and he looks a right fatty so he couldn't have been much cop. George Best, well, if it was an international birding, boozing and getting arrested Hall of Fame he's a cert - except he wouldn't turn up. The whole thing's a

I was saying just that to the chairman this morning and he said I was just bitter because I wasn't in it. Ridiculous, me, bitter? I'm known as Mr Generous-of-spirit at the golf measure-of spirits? Like Harpo Marx said, or was it Karl?

more like. I mean, look at let you in isn't worth being in".

and two appearances for the didn't like their government. not my main claim, it's the six there, social inadequates, other things I've done that staring at the screen all day.

> tion, specially formulated for playing with 10 men. The titfer. Three points for a win-it started in our Subbuteo league. Top place in the Pig & or, samply, Gaffé. Whistle's Fantasy league two years running. I was also the first manager in the Premier-ship to complete my Panini World Cup collection - though Rund might have beaten me if he hadn't thought you had to buy the real-life player as well.

Only last week my influence

persuaded Sludgethorpe

Mind you, I should be in Avenue to Old Comfield in I quite far

But that wasn't enough for themselves, three successful the idiots who picked it. I'm promotion campaigns, a dold they were computer nerds League Cup runners up nietal On the Internet and journes so

Maybe I should have changed my name. Pele, Zico, fitness video, as used by Rotten- , Ensebio, Carricha, Jairzinho, ham Hotspur. The classic, there's a disproportionate camel-skin coat and matching number with one name. Per-titler. Three points for a win - haps I should have called myself Gafferissmo, Gafferincha

Of course, if I was manager of Barcelona I'd be nicknamed El Gaffer, Not that it's likely, though I did mention to President Nunez, when I was at the Nou Camp for the Newcastle game doing TV summarising for the Playboy Channel, that Louis van Gaal had made a right pig's ear of it and English

job as well, Kenny's bound to the fittings damaged when the do a runner soon so that'll be 'sprinkler system went off. I available. Apparently they prefer teams to go down in a blaze smoking room. of glory rather than nicking 1-0 wins. Having lost 4-3, 5-2, 6-1 and 7-0 this season I think I can safely say my team meets that criteria, better get a copy of the

CV typed up just in case. PH have to do it myself as we've let Bridget, our latest secretary, go after some problems in Barcelona. I suggested she come along to help me with some arrangements but distinctly remember telling her that, due to the latest expenses purge, she was to book only

to discover she had booked two rooms but understood when I discovered two of her mates had come along as well. It was the unfortunate incident involving the three of them, an emptied mini-bar, the complimentary bowl of fruit and the bell boy

as long as I can join in. As it is I quite fancy the Newcastle the club is being billed for all fold her not to light up in a no-

'At least we're getting a few

quid this week by loaning the Old Comfield to the local rugby club. Apparently playing rugger at footy grounds is the trendy thing. I just hope they all afternoon with their heads up each other's backsides seems to make these blokes behave very strangely. I've hidden my after shave collection in case they get thirsty and Sir Hirem's locked the boardroom, we don't want hookers cavorting on the oak table, at least not until the board's Christmas party. Shaun Prone will not be travelling with us, he has ricked a back muscle playing snooker while Ivor Niggle has heavy bruising which he said he got after he fell off while surfing the

Barry Gaffer was talking to

SIDELINES

When Trautmann joined County set

In the space of three years in the mid-1960s, Stockport County finished last in the League and Manchester City first. Today they



e to be best fo

meet in a First Division derby with County 13 places above City -a situation Bert Trautmann must find more bemus-

The former PoW, now retired in Germany, played 508 times in City's goal at Premiership level before sampling life at the foot of the Fourth Division as County's general manager. Curiously, Trautmann is one of numerous keepers to serve both clubs, including Steve Fleet, Alan Ogley, Ken Mulhearn (of City's title-winning side of '68), Barry Siddall, Paul Cooper and current County custodian Eric

Stockport also have a tradition of appointing ex-City players as manager. Gary Megson is the latest in a line stretching from David Ashworth in the 1920s, through Bob Marshall before the war and Jimmy Meadows in the "Go, Go, Go County!" era Trautmann helped to launch, to Mike Summerbee and Asa Hartford in recent times.

Stuart Lee and Bill Williams made scant impact on stepping up from Edgeley Park to Maine Road, whereas County's historic role has been to take City's surplus stock, like the splendidly named Albert Emptage, David Shawcross and Ade Mike, or veterans such as Alex Herd and Roy Clarke. Herd, who partnered his son David (later of Manchester United) in County's attack, was part of City's first championship team in 1937. Typically, they went down a year later.

Ten things that Derby County's **Estonian** Mart Poom might be missing today

I Cleaner, Singer Vinger. 5 The plethora of wines, Metro Luminal and Roovel Oobik. Not exotically named imports to the Estonian league, but top Baltic pop bands.

the tourist board have obviously been enjoying. 6 Sixth century towns of unrivalled beauty.

2 Viljandi's Drama 7 Twentieth century towns content.

country's main selling tourist board, alongside 10 Being occupied. By the.

the Russians again...

HISTORY

LESSON

When Manchester City trav-

their neighbours in the First

Division, they might like to

look back on the last season

the two clubs were in the

ended with the same margin

between the two clubs but,

while Stockport finished

The First Division that

year looked very similar to to-

day's Premiership, with a top

Blackburn, Newcastle and

Football in the south was

struggling to make an impact

then. In the top two divisions

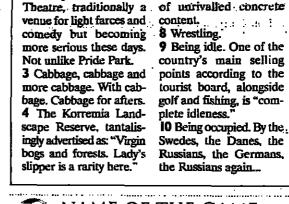
there were only six clubs

Tottenham, Bristol City,

Woolwich Arsenal, Chelsea,

Manchester United.

The 1909-10 campaign



NAME OF THE GAME No 11: COLO COLO

Happily, the most famous club in Chilean football were not an early sponsorship target by a soft-drinks company. Colo Colo were founded in 1925 by five angry members of the Magallanes team, who disagreed over the choice of a new captain and went off to form their own club. When it came to finding a name, the rebels decided that the local term for a wildcat would be most appropriate. It is not known whether every Colo Colo goal is termed a wildcat strike.



On 2 December 1911, Blackburn Rovers travelled to el today to Stockport Coun-Manchester to continue ty, who are 13 places above

their challenge for the First Division title. Their opponents that

day, however, were not their main championship rivals, same division. top-of-the-table Manchester United, but the other local team, and supposed walkovers, Manchester City.

A walkover it was not. 13th City won the title. City Despite being under the won both matches against stewardship of captain "Cultheir local rivals 2-1. tured" Bob Crompton, an England full-back in the Graeme Le Saux mould, Blackburn lost 3-0, and even five of Aston Villa, Liverpool, suffered the indignity of a

Crompton own goal. On the same day, Manchester United beat Newcastle 3-2, but ultimately it mattered not for Rovers. They went on to win the First | from south of Birmingham; Division title that season for the first time, with both

United and City well behind. Fulham and Clapton Orient. THIS WEEK'S TRANSFERS

En Joulus); Sjom Johansen (midfielder) Tromso (Andria Sudfampton (2200000); Mitch Ward (midfielder) Sheffield Linsed in Serton (sward); Carl Tiler (defender) Steffield Und in Serton (sward); Gruham Steart (forward) Everton in Sheffield Und (swap deal plus Esonoto); Paul Trollepe (midfielder) Derby Courty to Fulfam (Esonotog); Steve McAnespie (desender) Solton Windersen in Service (desender)

Contributors: Phil Shaw, Nick Harris, Paul Newman Readers' contributions welcome. Send to Sidelines, Sports Desk The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL a-mall address: sport @ independent.co.uk

Liverpool set to challenge blocking of Friedel move

Brad Friedel was unexpected- find it incredible that it has takly blocked from joining Liver- en so long for the Department pool last night when the to reach such an unsatisfacto-Government turned down his work permit application.

The United States international goalkeeper was shocked to find out that his £2m move to Anfield had been stopped by the Department of Environment and Education Liverto the High Court.

The Department blocked players should have "around 75 per cent of caps in the past two years." Friedel has 71.4 per cent from playing in 10 out of the last 14 competitive games.

Ironically, Friedel has played more internationals than his American rival, Kasey Keller, who is already in the country at Leicester City.

Friedel's record was good enough for the football authorities to give the move their blessing on Monday, but the Overseas Labour Office ignored their recommendation. Portsmouth have had similar keeper, Zeliko Kalac.

It is the fifth time Friedel has ed at over £10m, put all their had a work permit application rejected. Celtic, Newcastle, Sunderland and Southampton have all failed in the past. He could go to Europe where Benfica, PSV Eindhoven and Kaiserslautern are keen on him.

A Department spokesman said last night: "Friedel did not hopes to win a call-up from Jameet the criteria for football in our opinion - although the club has a right to appeal."

Liverpool put out a statement last night that read: "We ry conclusion. We shall take further advice on the matter once we have received written confirmation of the decision and

their reasons for it." Fuiham have been blocked in their quest to field three former Premiership men for the pool are ready to take the fight trip to Preston today. They have spent almost £2m this week on Alan Neilson from the move because it ruled that Southampton, Paul Trollope season for United this term and Friedel fell just below the num- from Derby and Steve McAne- has emerged as a popular figber of caps needed to get a work spie from Bolton, but their fax ure in a United side he rates as permit. The guidelines state a to the Football League to reg- the best seen at Tannadice for ister the trio arrived too late for

them to play today. The Coventry manager, Gordon Strachan, has put the David Burrows-Mark Pembridge exchange deal on hold. Burrows has agreed personal terms with Sheffield Wednesday - but Strachan has not yet spoken to Pembridge, Coventry hone to receive £350,000 plus Pembridge

in the deal, if the Welsh international agrees terms. Oxford United have eased their financial worries by selling their midfielder Bobby Ford to Sheffield United for problems with an Australian £400,000. The Manor Ground club, whose debts are estimat-

> players up for sale a week ago. Chris Sutton has signed a new contract with Blackburn Rovers that will keep him at the club until the summer of 2003.

> The Birmingham City defender Michael Johnson is the latest British-based player who maica for the World Cup. He was born in Nottingham but his parents were both born in Ja-

Dykstra bent on keeping Celtic at bay

Sieb Dykstra, Dundee United's Dutch goalkeeper, is con-fident of handling the pressure and keeping his manager's blood pressure down in tomor-row's Coca-Cola Cup final

Dykstra admitted he blundered in gifting Henrik Larsson Celtic's second goal in the 4-0 league win the Parkhead club enjoyed last week, and has promised not to run into further trouble in the final at Ibrox.

After a week of reflection, Dykstra reckons the heavy defeat in that dress rehearsal could even benefit United as the Celtic support are certain to demand a repeat performance, which may work against Wim

Dykstra, 31, has, the odd error apart, enjoyed a consistent years. He said: "Ahead of last week's game, we had gained six straight victories and I think we have forgotten the result at Celtic Park already.

"Talking to the players in the dressing room, the feeling is we will do well on Sunday as we have more than enough quality to beat them. The 4-0 scoreline was not a fair reflection of the match, on another day the ball would have gone in for us.

"I think it helps playing them again so quickly and the good thing about the 4-0 loss is Celtic to win easily - especially their own support. That will put more pressure on Celtic."

Dykstra conceded he was unhappy with his own contribution last week at Parkhead, but refuses to let his spirits drop. "I was not too pleased with the second goal that I let in. I should have held the ball. Even after fumbling it. I would usually have got to the second ball, but it bounced off my knee and Henrik Larsson pounced. Overall this season, however, I am very happy with my form, my performances have - Alan Nixon pleased me," he said.



Photograph: Rui Vieira/PA David Beckham at Old Trafford on Thursday night

United's position of strength

Manchester United can establish themselves as the team to beat in Europe. Martin Lipton

that everybody now expects Having achieved virtual perfection in Europe, Manchester United can turn their minds to producing something similar in the Premiership over the next four months before the

Champions' Cup returns to dis-Thursday's effortless dismissal of Kosice should have cleared away any doubts anyone could have had over the quality of the squad Alex Ferguson now has at his command. The only question mark lingers over their ability to take chances; they missed a hatful on Thursday. United can go to Turin for

gets in sight: they can establish themselves as the team to beat in Enrope and end the challenge of the Champions' League's strongest nation. Italian sides -Milan or Juventus - have appeared in all five finals since the European Cup emerged reborn in 1992, each winning once. Now, Parma's hopes hang by the thinnest of threads after being held at home by Sparta Prague, and United can put an

end to Juve's campaign by denying them in Turin. Even if United were to lose. Juve could go out. A draw between Monaco and Bayer Leverkusen in Group F would send them both through and wins in Group D for Real Madrid and Rosenborg - at home to Porto

ly-would do likewise for them. their final Group B match in 12 days' time with their quarterknocking Juve out irrespective final place secure but two tarof the result in Turin. Along with United. Germany's Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund. and the Ukraine's Dynamo Kiev are already sure of their places. Ferguson admits the turn of

events this week - set in motion by Feyenoord's win over Juve has forced him to reassess the dangers to his team. "It's difficult to say who the main threats to us are now," he said. "There have been some shocks. It looks as if PSV could be out, too, and there could still be some more."

One thing that Ferguson thinks has made all the difference for his side this season is confidence. "Last year we had the comfort of knowing we could finish second in the group and still qualify. But this time we felt we had to be first. We've done that, and at Olympiakos, respective- and I think we've deserved it."

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE

Miller aiming to prove a point

Alan Miller, West Bromwich Albion's man of the moment, will run out at the Riverside Stadium today with a point to prove games. to Middlesbrough's manager, Bryan Robson.

Miller insists the game is not a grudge match against the club which sold him to Albion for a bargain £400,000 in March, but admits he was deeply disappointed with the way his career on Teesside turned out.

The London-born goalkeeper made an immediate im-Middlesbrough side which powered to the First Division title in 1995, but he lost his place in the team once they had moved into the Premiership.

He was then allowed to go in a £400,000 move. That has pressure to cut wages."

proved to be a master stroke by Ray Harford, with Miller producing 14 clean sheets in 32

Miller said: "I was desperately disappointed after working hard and gaining promotion. That was the highlight of my career. But not getting a run of games after that was upsetting because without that you can't get your form together. If I am honest about things, that period made me find things out about myself. It was pact as a key part of the good for my attitude to train-

ing and to football in general. "At Middlesbrough, the highs were high and the lows were very low. I couldn't really understand some of the things that went on there. I think to Albion, first on loan and then the manager was under a lot of

Jaime Moreno may have to wait for his chance to impress in his second spell at Middlesbrough. The Bolivian international striker is keen to help Boro's push for promotion after returning to the Riverside after spell with Washington DC Utd, but Robson feels he may not yet be ready.

Craig Hignett has not broken his collar bone as was first feared but he has strained tendons in his shoulder and will miss the game with West Bromwich. Anthony Ormerod wili replace Hignett.

Darren Williams has recovered from a head wound to retain his place in an unchanged Sunderland side for the home game against Tranmere. Michael Gray has also recovered from a groin injury.

Huddersfield's leading scorer, Marcus Stewart, returns after hamstring trouble to form a £2m partnership with Wayne Allison for the first time when Bury visit the McAlpine Stadium.

The Birmingham City midfielder Martin Grainger starts a three-game ban and will miss the home match against Portsmouth. The central defender Darren Wassall will have a late fitness check on his ankle injury.

The Portsmouth striker Mathias Svensson is expected to make his first appearance in two months and the Jamaican internationals Paul Hall and Fitzroy Simpson return. Terry Fenwick's side will be without their Australians, Craig Foster, John Aloisi and Robbie Enes. who are needed for the World Cup qualifier against Iran.

Superior Stockport relish fallen neighbours' visit

Stockport play Manchester City in the league for the first time in 87 years today and will relish their superior position as they go into the game.

While County lie seventh in the First Division, their mighty neighbours from seven miles up the A6 are 20th and struggling.

Edgeley Park, including the port are doing." manager, Gary Megson, and goalkeeper, Eric Nixon, who both had spells at Maine Road in better days, intend to make the most of the encounter. "I followed City as a lad and

said. "Obviously I've got a soft

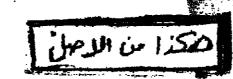
spot for them but make no mis-

thought City fans believed he lacked the skill to play for their team, is no less determined. "City are a huge club with huge support and they're only just up the road," he said. "But I've got no real interest in

Megson, who said he always

them. To tell you the truth, I'm The ex-City contingent at only interested in what Stock-County expect to name the side that won at Crewe last week, with Sean Connelly having fully recovered from a back

Frank Clark, the City managthen played for them," Nixon er, said: "We are going there in good heart after our last two games (a win and a draw). We take, I'll be doing all I can to know this will be a tough one, we are under no illusions about that."



25/FOOTBALL

Bosnich may have to be at his best for Australia

Today Australia or Iran will become the 32nd and last qualifiers for the World Cup finals in France next year. For Terry Venables Socceroos, much will

depend on a goalkeeper who, when he was a youngster, wanted to be a Test cricketer.

Richard Yallop reports from Melbourne.

When the 12-year-old Mark Bosnich was setting batting determined to make it in Engrecords for his junior cricket land and, after a spell with one club in Sydney, his dream of playing at the Melbourne Cricket Ground involved wearing the baggy green cap of the himself in the first team, and Australian Test cricketer, not the won a poll in one English maggoalkeeper's jersey.

Perhaps that explained why, in the middle of the Australian team's training yesterday for today's crucial World Cup qualifier against Iran, the brilliant but idiosyncratic Bosnich started turning over his arm and bowling, as though he was dreaming of catching England on a green

At Bosnich's old cricket club, they remember how he helped to put on 201 for the first wicket in one match, and how he was a diving slip fielder with safe hands. But, in the same year he was starring for his junior cricket team, he went for a coaching clinic at Sydney Marconi football club, encouraged by his father, who had emigrated from what is now Croatia.

The Marconi goalkeeping coach was Ron Corry, who is now on the coaching staff of the draw. Venables disputes that, needed by a goalkeeper - agiliof all, determination.

Within a year, Bosnich had

Premier League, and in 1988, at 16, he risked everything by leaving Sydney and flying to England for a trial with Manchester United. He persisted through the cold English winters, and all the difficulties posed by the fact that he had a student's visa, and so could only play for United as an amateur.

After playing for Australia in the World Youth Championship in 1991, and being voted the best goalkeeper in the tournament, he returned to England to find he had been given seven days' notice to leave the country, because he had no work permit.

Bosnich remained utterly of the Sydney clubs, he was finally offered his chance with Aston Villa in 1992. He established azine as the League's best goalkeeper in 1994.

With most of his English goals realised, the 25-year-old Bosnich today tackles another of his goals, providing the foundation to Australia's push under Terry Venables to reach its first World Cup finals since 1974. While the Australian team

has other talents, such as Harry Kewell, the 19-year-old Leeds United striker who scored in last weekend's 1-1 draw in the first leg in Tehran, and Mark Viduka, the Croatia Zagreb striker, together with allround skill and experience, much will depend on the confidence that spreads forward from Bosnich in goal.

The general view of last Saturday's first leg was that Australia had been fortunate to escape from Tehran with a 1-1

ty. reflexes, courage, and, most Australian improvement, as themselves collectively and re-man-based players. Khodadad set himself the goal of becom- is confident that the side will cessive wins under Venables in front of Bagheri, the Ausing a goalkeeper in the English play better on the flat, green up until Tehran.



Aston Villa's Mark Bosnich (right) trains with Josip Skok in preparation for today's World Cup qualifying play-off

With Iran's other two Ger-

tralians will be grateful that the

MCG pitch than it did in the patchy, bumpy Azadi Stadium.

The only change Venables has made is to replace Tony Vidmar, one of the flank players, with Stan Lazaridis, of West Ham, who helped lift the Iran-Australian team, and he saw a saying the Australians held up ian siege when he came on late midfield player, who missed natural in Bosnich. He was big, well against a skilful Iranian side in Iran. The key to the match the Tehran game because of susconfident, and had everything in an intimidating atmosphere. is whether Australia, buoyed by pension. Certainly there is room for an 80,000-plus crowd, will lift only Bosnich and Kewell im- produce the attacking form Azizi and Ali Daei, who proved pressed in Tehran, and Venables which had brought them 12 suc- so dangerous in Tehran, lurking

There is an Australian ex- teenage Bosnich gave up crickpectation of victory, but Iran et and decided to opt for a cashowed in the first leg that reer in goal. ● Today's match will be telethey can play good football. The Iranians will be strengthened by

vised live (9.15am GMT kickthe return of Karim Bagheri, off) by Eurosport, who will their influential German-based repeat the game in full at 2pm.

Milutinovic sacked despite success

FOOTBALL

AROUND

THE WORLD

BY RUPERT

METCALF

claimed that violence was a

frequent occurrence during

rigged games. A government

spokesman, Dimitris Rep-

pas, has dismissed the alle-

Suppoprters clashed in

three games last weekend. At

Ionikos, where Olympiakos

won 1-0, angry fans stormed

the pitch, clashing with play-

ers and police. Live television

pictures showed fans punch-

ing players in the face and hit-

Argentina's coach, Daniel

disciplinarian, caused a sur-

prise this week when he said

the team's players could have

sex with their wives during

banned the wearing of ear-

rings and refuses to pick

long-haired players, said the

only condition was that sex

did not take place in the

limits and, of course, we will

not permit it in the team's ho-

tel, but there will be no ob-

jections if they rent a house

or look for somewhere else to

ROAD TO WORLD

"We will impose some

team hotel.

Passareila, who has

next year's World Cup.

sarella, known as a strict

ting them with iron bars.

ARGENTINA

gations.

MEXICO

Mexico's coach, Bora Milutinovic, was sacked this week - just three weeks after he took his team to next year's World Cup finals in France. His dismissal follows three

weak performances by the Mexican team against opposition not considered top class, which brought widespread calls for him to go. Juan Jose Leano, the

chairman of the Mexican Football Federation, said the decision was taken unanimously by its national council after Milutinovic had submitted his report on the team's performances in the World Cup qualifiers. Milutinovic took charge of

the national squad in October 1995, having coached the United States and Costa Rica as well as Mexican club sides. Mexico's players were jeered off the pitch after sealing their World Cup finals place in less then flamboyant style against a 10-man United States side on 2 November - a game that ended goalless.

That substandard display was followed by others against Costa Rica and Jamaica. However, Milatinovic's supporters pointed to the fact that under his leadership Mexico won 23 out of 46 games and suffered only nine defeats. They said he was being made a scapegoat for the players' poor performances.

The new man in charge is Manuel Lapuente, the coach of the Mexico City-based club, Necaza. He returns for a second spell, having been fired from the post in 1992.

GREECE

Claims have been made in the the Greek parliament that matches have been rigged in the national league, which has led to numerous recent outbreaks of violence.

"It is common belief among supporters that the do it," he said. "I believe it championship and the team will be healthy."

Major weekend football fixtures and pools check

TODAY

FA Carling Premiership

9 Birmingham v Portsmouth 18 Bradford City v Norwich ... 11 Huddersfield v Bury 13 Magasacro v vest cater.
14 Oxford Utd v Port Vale ...
15 Sheffield Utd v Crawe ...
16 Stockport v Man City ...
17 Stoke v Reading
18 Sunderland v Tranmere ...

20 Bristol Rovers v Milwell 21 Bristol Rovers v Milwell 22 Burnley v Northampton 23 Cartisle v Bristol City 24 Chester field v Southend. 25 Gillingham v Grimsby 26 Plymouth v Oldham 27 Prestor v Fulhem ... 28 Weisell v Blackpool.

Third Division

36 Hull v Doncaster 37 Lincoln v Maccles 37 Lincom v Maccessed
38 Mansfield v Layton Orient
39 Notts Co v Peterborough
- Rochdale v Torquey
- Rotherham v Colchester Scunthorpe v Brighton . Shrewsbury v Swanses

Bell's Scottish League

60 Hibernian v Motherwei 11 Rangers v St Johnston
 Kilmernock v Durferni First Division

42 Airdrie v Stirling Albion 43 Morton v Partick....... 44 Harritton v Dundee...... 45 Raitin v Ayr 46 St Mirren v Fallerk...... Second Division

47 Brechin v Clyde ______ 48 Inverness v Queen of South_

Third Division Barwick v Ross County Cowdenbeath v Queen's Park

Scottish Coca-Cola Cup

FA Carling Premiership

WEEKEND FIXTURE GUIDE

TODAY

Football

.

.

Stalychold v Hattlesch, Induct v Machinery Accing to Ranky Y Third round qualitylags Accington Stanley v Fluncom: Ayesbury v Dukeich, Barrow v Hincidey Utd; Bashley v Cirencester: Besingstole v Floratont; Beber v Boston Utd; Berkhamstad v Salsbury; Bitericay v Aldershot; Bradford Park Avenue v Leigh RMI; Bromley v Purfleet; Bornegrove v Worksop; Chesham v Sutton Ltd; Corby v Margete; Dorchester v Worthing; Galestorough v Barrber Bridge; Greet Harwood v Wiston Abbon; Halesowen v Burton Albon; Halesowen v Burton Albon; Halesowen v Burton Albon; Halesowen v Burton Albon; Harrogate Town v Blytt; Harrow Borough v Beth; Hestings v Heybridge; Hitchin v Boreham Wood; Kingh Lynn v Chelmstord; Mahine v Gerethern; Mathock v Winsbord; Merthyr v Carrbridge City; Nunseon v Alarhochsm; Stingbourne v Albington Town; Sollail v Emley; St Albers v Bishop's Stortford; Turfworth v Lancester; Wisbech v Raunds; Yeading v St Loonards.

Ingocurre v Abragan v News, General V Ingocurre v Lancaster, Wisbech v Raunds; Yearing v St. Laonards.

RYMAN LEAGUE Premier Division: Carstellion v Hendon; Enterior v Division: Carstellion v Hendon; Enterior v Division: Carstellion v Hendon; Enterior v Division: Barton v Witnesser (Kingstonian v Dagestam & Rechordge, First Division: Barton v Witnesser & Rechordge, First Division: Barton v Witnesser & Barton v Romans, V Chartesy, Stainse v Layton Permant, Wembley v Bognor Regis: Wickingham v Croydon, Second Division: Barton v Hothers & Barton v Romans, Second Division: Barton v Hothers of Barton v Hothers, Barton v Hothers, Carwey Island v Tburry, Chalton's St. Peter v Hungerfort; Cheshum v Breistrae, Metropolium Polica v Edyward; Wisaldstone v Marfow, Windsor & Econ v Legition; Wiverhou v Hothers. Thirm Division: Coristina Cassals v Croydon Athletic, Dorton y Capton: East Thirmock v Homoliumdi; Plackwell Heath v Ware; Ford v Wingson & Finchley; Harfow v Beson & Essattende Heathers of Auckland v Redeliffs; Chorley v Alfredon; Estado v Astron v Hothers, Ford v Wingson & Finchley; Harfow v Beson & Essattende Heathers of Auckland v Redeliffs; Chorley v Alfredon; Barton v Astron; Netterfield v Tariford; Succkstridge PS v Boxton; History Lings of Auckland v Redeliffs; Chorley v Alfredon; Barton; Birton v Marton; Netterfield v Tariford; Succkstridge PS v Boxton; Withov Congleton; Wordon; V Romans, Baston v Boxton; Paralley v Lincoln Litt; Flacton v Astron; Netterfield v Tariford; Succkstridge PS v Boxton; Heston; Withov Congleton; Wordon; Premier Division; Astrony w Rechon; Succkstridge PS v Boxton; Heston; Withov v Forest Green; Grassley v Crawley; Wordon v Romans, Baston v Boxton; Sturren Division; Balton v Sutton Codifict; Paget v Bedword; Snephed Dynamo v Rechon; Chapenhan v Bridge Paralley Division; Glasford v Brancher; Fister v Weston v Marrycossield; Chapenham v Bridger, Ferst v Mendon; Helston v Glastonbury; Yowt v Hellington v Veston v Mendon; Policion; Helston v Glastonbury; Yowt v Hellington v Hellington v

NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE First NV-RITH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE PEST DIVISIONS LEAGUE TEST DIVISIONS Afterion Collectes; Darwert V Venchall GM; Glossop North End v Holler Old Boyshian Rode v Ressandials; Mossley v Kidegrove; Niertwich v Citheroe; Nerscasfe Town v Eschool Rovers; Ramsbottom v Prescot Cables; Stellens v Hastingden; Warrington v Chalderton.

Cables, Striebers v Hastingder, Werrington v Chaddrein Hasturance NORTHERN LEAGUE First Divisions Bedington Teritars v Billingham Sheri, Billingham Synthosis v Durham Capak v Consett, Durston Federation v RTM Newcastie, Guisborough v Morent, James Roofing v Shildon; Murtan v Tow Law, Pentilin v South Shields; Stockson v Essination.

WINSTONLEAD ICENT LEAGUE First Division: Canterbury v Greenwich Borough;
Creatern v Herne Bay, Corintisen v Deat Cray
v Sheppey, Crocleantil v Folkestone Invitize,
Erith v Thamesmeed; Faversham v Beclerhent; Ramesales v Hythe; Stade Green v
Lordswood; Inshridge Walks v Swentery Furness; Whitstable v VCD.
UNILET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE First
Division:-hasancies v Mile Calc, Pascolusern
& Hiscounie v Burgess Hit; Portfield v Saiddean; Whistehesk v Heldt, Wild v Haishem
UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE
Premier Division: Boston v Ford; Bourne v
Eynesbury; Nempston v Long Buckby;
Northempton Spencer v Wolwy; Potton v
Bucktorjam; Si Neots v Desborough; Stamtord v Wootton; Staffold v Holbeach; Wellingborough v Mirriese Blackstone.
NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE

borough v Mirres Blackstone.

NORTHERM COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE

Premier Division: Armithorpe Welfars v Halam; Brigg v Ecclerist; Deneby v North Ferhöy; Cosett Ablon v Glesshoughton Welfare;
Pidering v Curzon Astron; Ponteiract Cots v Cosett Town; Selby v Liversedge; Sheffleid v Hatfield Mein; Thackley v Huchneil.

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: Lymington v Trustchem; Aerostructures v Bournemouth:

v Hatfield Main; Thiscidey v Hucknell.

LEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: Lyntington v
Thistinem; Aerostructures v Bournemouth;
8AT v Christinunch; East Cowes Vice v
Downton; Bastilely w Welschunch; Cosport
Borough v Totton; Portsmouth RN v Andover;
Winthome v Bemerton Heath.

JEWSON EASTERN LEAGUE Premier Division; Clacton v Feisentone Port & Town; Harwich & Perisecton v By; Nowmarker v
Heistead; Soham v Sudbury Wanderens;
Sudbury Rown v Lownestoft; Cytes v Bury
Town; Warboys v Stowmarket; Woodbridge
v Histon.

INTERLINK EXPRESS MIDLAND ALLIANCE: Boldmens St Micheels v Bioxvich;
Bridgnorth v Okbury; Chesetown v Wednefield; Pelsell Ville v Shifnst; Rushall Olympic
v Stratford; Sendwell Borough v Hongs Montry, Steperhill v Krypensley Wilsnisk West Midlands Police v Perstone; Wilsnish V Roceles.
PRESS & JOURNAL HIGH-AND LEAGUE;
Brora Rangers v Buckle: Thistie; Clachnacuddn v Reith; Deveromate v Fort Willem;
V Loselemoush; Wick Academy v Fisserburgh.
SAMENNOFF RISH LEAGUE Premier Division: Bengor V Lame; Californife v
Glentoran; Coloraine v Limiteld; Crusaders v
Omegh Town; Glenown v Ards. First Division: Bengor V Lame; Cartick v Newny; Ditillery v Dungarmon Swifte; Limavedy Univ

Ballyciana.

LEAGUE OF WALES (2.30): Aberystwyth v Fint Town; 83 Bangor City v Hesenfordwest; Bany Rosn v Corney (20; Cassisses v Cernaes Ynys Mort Carmarthen Town v Carmarton Rosn; Cornelts Custy v Respectations; Continuent v Tolk Lensandfreid; Elbov Wale v Porthmetog; Rhyl v Newtown (2.0); Welshpool v Inter Cable-Tel Cardit.

HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE OF RELAND Presenter Oliviation: Firm Harps v Bohemians (2.30); Sigo Rovers v Shamsock Rovers (7.30).

Rugby Union INTERNATIONAL MATCHES England v South Africa (2.0) ___ (at internation)

ties Under-21 v New Zealand Under-21 (1145) (at Twickenham).
TETLEY'S BITTER COUNTY CHAMPI-ONSHIP North and Middlands League-One: Campin v Notic, Lincs & Derby (230) (at Pentith); Werwickshire v Duftern (230) (at Fuughy). League-Two:

CHELTENHAM AND GLOUCESTER CUP Group B: Oriell v Potherham (120), Group C: Sale v Bristo (120), Group D: Cambridge Univ v Backhasah (30); London Scottleh v Bedford (1130).

Univ v Blackheath (3.0); London Scottlen v Bedford (19.30).

JEWSON NATIONAL LEAGUE ONE: London Welsh v Modey (2.5). Two North: Hinckley v Aspatra (2.30); Nuneston v Stouthridge (2.30). Two South: Cheltenham v Berlding (2.30); Hensey v Reduth (2.0); North Waisham v Metropolitan Police (3.0).

SRU TENNENTS PREMIERSHIP First Division (2.0); Boroughmuf v Heriots FF; Curte v West of Scottland; Edinburgh Acads v Metrosa; Jad-Forsat v Watsonians; Stifling Courty v Hando: Second Division (2.0); Biggs v Kitmemock; Gela v Kitmaidy; Glesgow Hawks v Dundee HSFP; Kelso v Preston Lodge; Mussalburgh v Pseblos; Tithrd Division (2.0); Aberdeen GSFP v Stewart; Ayr v Seldrit; Glasgow Southem v Hillings, June Culture (2.0); Aberdeen GSFP v Stewarts Mehtle FF v Grangemouth.

CLUB MATCHEES: Plymouth Abtion v Pen-

CLUB MATCHES: Plymouth Albion v Pen-zance (230); Preston Gresshoppers v Kirk-by Londdale (215).

Hockey

Hockey

NATIONAL LEAGUE Premier: Bartord
Tigers v East Grinstead (120); Beeston v
Hourstow (130); Carmock v Guidtord (120);
Doncaster v Canterbury (20); Southgate v
Old Loughsorians (20); Pediangton v Reading (Reacts School, Oxenott, 20); First Division: Booklends v Gloucester City (20);
Creimetord v St Albers (20); Havent v
Bourville (145); Hull v Oxford Hewits (120);
Indien Gyntdrama v Sheffeld (130); Isca v
Loughborough Students (20); Lawes v
Loughborough Students (20); Lawes v
Hampstead & Westminster (130); Codord
Unit v Harteston Mappies (220); Stourport v
Busharts (130); Surbon v Firebrands (10);
Warrington v Bromley (130).

DTZ MIDLAND Premier: Blossomfield v
North Notts; Covertry & North Warwick v
Hampton-h-Arder; Edgbaston v Herborne;
Ktalsa v, Northampton Sahts; North
Statiford v Blocketch; Notlingham v Olton &
West Warwick.

ESL SOUTH Premier: Beckerham v Old

west varwox.

ESL SOUTH Premier: Beckenham v Old Whightiens; Boumenouth v Chichester; City of Portsmouth v Eastcole; Farehens v Anchortens; Goire Court v Henne Bey; Rampertite v Meliclenheed; Richmond v Pustey; Irojans v High Wycombe; Turchidge Welse v Windledon; Winchester v Wolding.

v Wimbledorr, Winchester v Wolding, ADNAMS SAST Premier: Bishop's Stortford v Luten Town; Cambridge Univ v jewich; Clactori v Colchester; Croetyx v Cambridge City; Suchtury v Peterstorough, NORTH PREMIER First Division: Ben Rhydding v Classier; Durhern Linhv v Sheffleid; Neaton v Timperley; Norton v Hamogate; Southport v Wigan; Swalkest v Formble, WeST OF ENGLAND & SOUTH WALES. Premier: Bristol Univ v Chelterham; Robinsons v Swarsee; Taumon Vale v Sath Buocaneax; Weston-super-Mare v Exister Univ. Whitchurch v Clevedon.

caneax; Westor-Auper-Mark v Estate Christopher V Clavedon.
WOMEN'S NATIONAL LEAGUE Premier:
Cifron Scottish Life v Sutton Coldifiel.
(#230); Doncaster v Inswich (#23); Slough
v Hightown (#23); Trojans v Olton Ferrequest (130). First Division: Canterbury v
Loughborough Students (#23); Leicaster v
Bradicad Swithersboark (#230); Sunderhand
Bedens v Chelmstord Highway (#230);
Wirnbledon v Bradnell (#23). Second Division: Aldridge v Poymicn (#23); Elutharts
v Snerwood (#230); Old Loughonierns v Widing Swifts (#0); West Winney v Eafing (#20).
ROYAL AL-FAISEL WOMEN'S MIDLAND
Premier: Belper v Crimson Ramblers;
Hampton-k-Arden v Pickwick; Leicaster v
Kettering; North Staffs v Luton.
WOMEN'S EAST SUPER LEAGUE Premier: Ashdord v Ipswich; Bury S; Edmunds
v Wellyin Garden City; Harleston Magpies
v Demien's St Albars v Severnosks;
WOMEN'S NORTH Premier: Chester v WOMEN'S NORTH Premier: Chester V York Leytend Motors v Sheffeld; Liverpool Setton v Blackburn; Welton v Winnington Park.

WOMEN'S WEST Premier: Colwall v Boumamouth; Eveter v Leominster; Exmouth v St Austell; Rediand v Cheltenhant; Taunton Valle v Yatia.

vale v rap. WOLEEN'S SOUTH First Division: Dulwich v Tule Hit: Hendon v Winchester; Horshem v Hempsteed & Westminster; Majdenheed v Southampton; Winchmore Hill v Reading. WOMEN'S TRYSPORTS THREE COUNTIES
First Division: Bracknell v Reading; City of
Oxford v Oxford Hawler, Femham Common
vSoming; Harley v West Winey, Maldambad
v Million Keynes, Newbury v Oxford Uzbr, Windsor v Million Keynes I; Wycombe Rye v
Ranelegh.

Basketball MEN'S EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP Semi-final round: England v Spein (730) (at Phymouth Pavillone). NATIONAL LEAGUE Men's First Division; Cardiff v Mid Susses (8/0).

SUPERLEAGUE: Nottingham v Basingstoks (70); Bracknell v Ayr (81).

Other sports BOXING: Professional Pormotion (Norwich Sports Village). SNOOKER: UK Championship (Presion).

TOMORROW Football

HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE OF IRIS-LAND Presider Division: Cork City v Kliken-ry City (20): University Colege Dublin v Dundek (3:5). Rugby Union INTERNATIONAL MATCH: reland v Cene-da (1.45) (et Lansdowne Road).

TOUR MATCH: Saracens v Tonga. TOUR MATCH: Sensons v Yongs.
TETLEY'S BITTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP South League Two: Donest & Wits
v Gloucestarshire (230), at Bournemouth).
League Tiree: Surrey v Buckinghemshire
(30) at Imber Court).
CHELTENHAM AND GLOUCESTER CUP
Group A: West Harrispool v Fylde (30).
WESH NATIONAL LEAGUE First Division:
Bonyman v Newbridge (30); Manthyr v Dunvari (230).

Hockey

EHA MEN'S CUP Fifth round: Berlard Tigers.

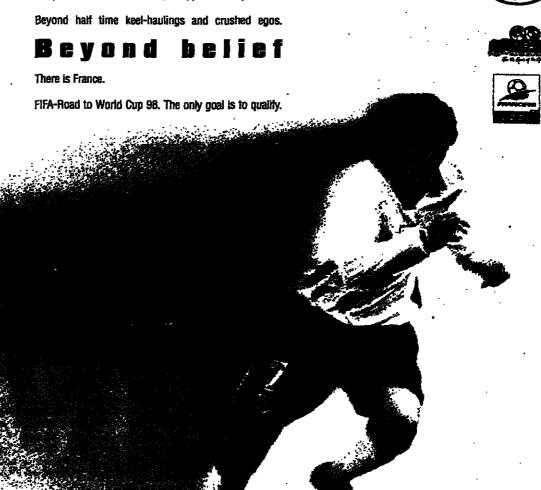
v Reading (2,0); Beeston v Soutingste (2,0); Canterbury v Hourstow (10); Chichester v Hampsleed & Westmister (10); Tpewich v Stoupont (2,30); Old Craniciphens v Spelding (1,30); St Albans v Donosater (10). St Alberts v Doncaster (LD).

EHA WOMEN'S CUP Fourth round: Bracknel v Epsom (110); Shedbord Swithenbark v
Sough (2:15); Chetraford Highway v
Southampton (10); Distributory Greys v Trojane
(130); Esting v Leicaster (2:15); Esster v
Aldridge (130); Heristoton Niegries v Demhem
(2:0); Hightown v Carrierbury (12:0); Loughborough Students v Chrimon Remblers
(2:30); Otton Terraquest v Tauriero Nels (2:0);
Foymon v Chemwood (13:0); Sunbury v Welton (10); Sutton Coldrided v Swindon (2:30);
Whitiay Bay v Ciffon Scottish Lile (10); WokIng Switts v Wirthiston (13:0).

OTHER MATCH: West Wirtney v Stellenbosch
University (10).

Ice hockey THE EXPRESS CUP: Manchester v Not-tingham (60); Basingstoke Blson v Ayr (60).

Other sports SNOCKER: UK Championehip (Prestori). TENNIS: European Women's Team Cham-pionship (Recibridge). Beyond commitment. Beyond skill. Beyond ruptured sinew and torn tendon. Beyond rain sharper than scalpels and hearts of oak, snapped and splintered. Beyond half time keel-haulings and crushed egos. Bevond belief



Sony PlayStation" - SEGA Saturn" - Mintendo64" - Window

Liverpool play Arsenal tomorrow and Manchester United next Saturday in a make or break week for their title challenge.

Can they change from being infuriatingly fickle to consistent match winners? A fully committed Oyvind Leonhardsen is in no doubt.

So much for the Spice Boys image. The Liverpool players had been given the day off, the weather was dank and uninviting, but Melwood was packed instead of isolated. Steve McManaman and Robbie Fowler practised shooting, Jamie Redknapp was alone foot, creating circles of precision in the misty air.

In the distance two figures shot repeatedly against a wooden wall. One, Bjorn Kvarme, was tall, every inch a professional footballer, but the other had a smaller, almost boyish, physique. He could have been a teenager, his mind seeing Wembley or An-Over and over again, left foot, right foot, volley, chip.

Every boy with a shred of football ambition has been there and Oyvind Leonhardsen certainly had. "Just like when I was a kid," he said, smiling at the memory. A Norwegian kid whose television heroes in those days wore the red shirt he now near, agrees: "One of the best bears. Maybe Kenny Dalglish players I've ever signed." also drilled against Melwood's wooden walls. Leonhardsen back, has played with and would hope so.

It is a big season for a midfield player whose build and player and he's hard to mark bewillingness to work reminds cause he's here and there, movthe Kop of a latter day left-sided Ray Houghton. It began with a careful he'll gets into positions £3.5m move from Wimbledon and will culminate in the World Cup finals, a season that, in A team need a player who will League terms, will probably sit in midfield and another who hinge on the next seven days. Liverpool, the great enigmas

of the Premiership, face Arsenal tomorrow at Highbury and Manchester United next Sat- had"-to make his Premiership cut inside rather than out, but I'm urday at Anfield knowing that debut for the club of his boysuccessive defeats will make hood heart, scoring against the runners-up spot and the Derby on 25 October. Things I'm happy just to play." Champions' League an unlikely carrot never mind the ultimate domestic prize.

No one has a clue whether they will succeed, Roy Evans no more than the rest of us. Brilliant or awful, deadly or profligate, the team slip from one to the other without a join. There have been some glorious performances night, but that's easy to say afsince Evans became manager in January 1994, but there have been achingly frustrating ones, too, the most stark in the memory being Strasbourg away and Barnsley at home.

The next seven days could undo a lot of the damage in the Premiership and the players been looking good going into age prematurely.

know it. Which is why they for- Sunday's match. Now it's hardto the training ground at Melwood. Neil Ruddock, Mark Wright, Rob Jones, Jason McA-doing it. You have to be positive. teer all sweating when they Even against Barnsley we didn't could have been in bed. Who says they do not care?

"We do care," Leonhardsen said. "The fact we're here shows everyone is trying. Consistency has been a problem for years now, and if we knew why we'd probably be champions. All you can do is work as hard as you can and try to get it right. training even on our days off to

"I've been doing ball work, developing skills. Even at 30 years old you can still learn things if you're prepared to try."

Perhaps if Leonhardsen, 27, had been fit at the start of the season, Liverpool would not have made such a lethargic flicking the ball from foot to start. Eager, energetic, he was at the vanguard of a Norwegian invasion of the Premiership when he arrived at Wimbledon for £600,000 in December 1994 after helping Rosenborg to a third successive Norwegian title.

For two and-a-half years he personified the Wimbledon craft-with-graft ethos, an uncut jewel among many polished in field instead of darkened timber. south London. He is, Joe Kin-

BY GUY **HODGSON**

Rob Jones, Liverpool's right-

against him. "He never stops running," he said. "He's a busy ing all the time. Unless you're you don't expect and, for a midfielder, he scores a lot of goals. goes and he does that for us."

shook off a hamstring strain - began my runs from a more cen-"the longest injury I've ever would be promising if only Liverpool could lose the capacity to shoot themselves in the foot.

"It's always difficult away in Europe, but when we saw Strasbourg at home we couldn't believe we had lost 3-0 to them in France," Leonhardsen said. "We were a bit unlucky that terwards."

And Barnsley? "We just

can't afford to lose at home to teams like them," he replied. "We've made it very difficult for ourselves. If we'd won that match we'd have been right up behind the leaders. We'd have

sook their day of leisure to go Two big games and we need at least four points from them.

"We know we're capable of play particularly well but we created a lot of chances. That's the positive side to the game, we could have won. At least we know we are creating enough to score even on bad days. We have to forget that game and look forward to Arsenal."

In other words, his new side are infuriatingly fickle. Coming It hasn't happened yet but we're from the overachievers, Wimbledon, to the underachievers of Antield, Leonhardsen should be better placed than anyone to put his finger on Liverpool's erratic nature but his answer is a familiar one: pressure.

The training methods are not very different, but you don't have the pressure at Wimbledon. Each week they stay in the Premiership is an achievement for them. When they are playing big clubs like Liverpool, United or Arsenal they're just happy with every point they can get. It's easier being the underdog.

"Here we know we have to win every game and it's a big difference. If Wimbledon lose three games in a row it's not a crisis, everyone says 'yes, that's typical'. At Liverpool people would want to know what's wrong. There's great expectation, it's something you have to live with. It's one of the reasons I came here."

There was also the call of his youth in Kristiansund - the small Norwegian town where Manchester United's Ole Gunnar Solskjaer also hails from and watching Liverpool matches on television. "I always loved English football. It was so fast and exciting and the crowds created a great atmosphere. It's end to end which I thought would suit my style of play."

Wimbledon thought so, too, and now Liverpool, where he has been given a left-flank role rather than the central midfield one he would prefer. "It's my favourite position," he agreed. "Sometimes I feel I could do more there. You can get isolated on the Or at least he has since he wing and I feel I'd do better if I tral position. My inclination is to adapting. I feel it's going well. The competition is so strong here

"Leo", as his team-mates call him - his Wimbledon nickname was "Rigsby" - left Melwood to go house hunting. No beers, no carousing, no modelling. Vinny Jones, in his infamous newspaper column once described him as "boring", which in professional football speak means he is admired for his application and ambition.

"It's very special to be with Liverpool," he said, "but I want to win something. I didn't come here just for the sake of it. I believe we can. The season is still young." The next seven days will decide if Liverpool's is going to



Liverpool's Oyvind Leonhardsen: 'Consistency has been a problem for years and if we knew why we'd probably be champions'

El le cester

styled

Reluctant caretakers simply cannot clean up

Poor old Chris Hughton, he was even less in demand than a Spurs season ticket on Monday after "his" side had succumbed to Crystal Palace er anyway. It's got to be the (apparently, several fans nailed their season tickets to the club shop wall after the taker manager is onto a loser game; having drowned their sorrows they returned to find someone had nicked the nails but left the tickets).

The Spurs caretaker manager arrived belatedly at the post-match press conference to find only the tea ladies left to hear what he had to say, which couldn't have been much since he was only in the job 24 hours.

Caretaker managers are invariably thrust refuctantly Parkes, for example, looks as though saying boo to a goose would be beyond him - and Hughton, a capable full-back in his day but never one to court the limelight, resembled a rabbit caught in headlights en every possible opportunity when quizzed beforehand about his team selection.

There was a sense of déjà vu about the whole affair since he's currently keeping warm. it was exactly three years ago that the former Spurs defender Steve Perryman was every unattached manager gogiven one game in charge to stake his claim on the post va- tached ones) so he might have cated by Ossie Ardiles.

In the event, Spurs lost 2-0 and a disillusioned Perryman left to coach in Norway. But who'd be a caretaker managmost undesirable job in football because let's face it, a carewhichever way up you look at it. Win - and it is down to the players; he'd inherited a decent enough team anyway. Lose - and he obviously wasn't up to the job in the first place.

Not that either scenario bothered caretaker manager extraordinaire Parkes. He took charge at Blackburn after Ray Harford's resignation last October with Rovers rock bottom and without a Premiership win. By May, they under the spotlight - Tony were a creditable 13th having lost just eight games. Had Parkes been up for the job he'd have had a good case.

But he wasn't; he'd made that clear from the outset, unlike John Hollins who has takto broadcast his desire for the Queen's Park Rangers, which

Unfortunately for Hollins. OPR have been linked with ing (as well as plenty of at-



OLIVIA BLAIR ON THE SHORT STRAW DRAWN BY STAND-IN **MANAGERS**

manager's job at Harchester Rovers in Sky's new Dream Team soap now that Ron Atkinson has abandoned acting in favour of real life drama at Sheffield Wednesday where he has as his right-hand man the season's most successful caretaker manager (to date).

Peter Shreeves, for whom vacant manager's seat at the phrase right-hand man was surely invented, was in the Hillsborough hot seat when Wednesday thrashed Bolton 5-1 after a disastrous run which had prompted David Pleat's dismissal. While not

that the Wednesday players games at England's helm in were under less pressure to May 1974 before Don Revie perform than when Pleat was in the firing line.

Forest players who hadn't one - but that defeat came managed to win in 17 games for Frank Clark last season yet beat then second-placed Arsenal in Stuart Pearce's first game as caretaker manager. It obviously had something to do with Psycho's leadership qualities, but not that much. Clark, of course, went to

Maine Road where one of his first acts was to hand P45s to several of the backroom staff, among them the club stalwart Tony Book. The manager for five years (from 1974-79), he was also caretaker manager three times, bailing City out after Ron Saunders left in 1974; in 1989 when Mel Machin went; and again in 1990 following Howard Kendall's departure, prompting a former team-mate to say: "When the holocaust comes I want to be standing next to Bookie." Perhaps Book's motto should have been "Once more into the breach..." since this is

Manchester City after all. Perhaps the highest profile caretaker manager's job of them all went to another forwanting to take anything away mer City manager, Joe Merto be content with the caretaker from Shreeves, the reality is cer, who was given seven

was appointed. Mercer's record was a creditable one -Ditto those Nottingham won three, drawn three, lost against Scotland in the Home Championships.

One thing, however, char-

acterises all caretaker managers - they know there is a replacement waiting in the wings, or even in the stands, as Christian Gross was at White Hart Lane on Monday. At least Gross stayed there; two days earlier Keith Burkinshaw was in charge of Aberdeen (where he's director of football) for a game but found his expertise somewhat undermined by the appearance in the dug-out at half-time of the Dons' manager-in-waiting, Alex Miller. Even with two managers overseeing events, Aberdeen could only manage a 1-1 draw against Dunfermline.

But then Spurs legend Danny Blanchflower reckoned that great teams don't need managers, caretaker or otherwise. "Brazil," he said. "won the World Cup playing exhilarating football with a manager they'd had for three weeks, and what about Real Madrid at their greatest? You can't even remember who the

Flat season that makes you cry into your pint

sion and this one has so far brought on a severe case of delirium tremens. Just as it takes the correct personnel for a good drinking session, so in the same way, at the start of each season we look to our team and ask; have we the

players who can do the job? The second requirement is good beer, preferably slowsettling pints of Guinness. The football equivalent is skill. It is also essential that there are no ulterior motives beyond enjoying a good session. In terms of a team, what we are talking about here is commitment.

Most importantly, a good session needs no time restrictions or any other limitations. It must have the potential for development. So with a football team - provided there is some sign of progress, at least we have hope.

So how has it been at Manchester City so far, in terms of personnel, skill, commitment and potential?

Lee Bradbury looked likely to solve our scoring problem. Gerard Wickens promised to be a creative force in midfield. and Tony Vaughan was rated one of the most promising de-

fenders in the First Division. But no - Bradbury and Vaughan are the footballing

equivalent of the lad who

A season is like a drinking ses- starts puking after the first pint and spends the evening on the porcelain 'phone.

Wiekens is the character who starts with a good few yarns, gets maudlin and withdraws for the rest of the night staring into his pint.

Georgi Kinkladze is the man who has a wealth of anecdotes but who, because no one laughs at his first joke. refuses to tell any more because his audience is not worthy of him.

The personnel are sadly

FAN'S EYE VIEW NO 234 MANCHESTER CITY IOE O'NEILL

deficient. What about that vital lubricant, skill? Kinkladze is the freshly

brewed pint, lovingly coaxed from the pumps. But he, too, slightest unfavourable condition can disturb his delicate equilibrium. If things are not right, he turns into one of outer show with little substance. His work-rate has compared unfavourably with that of Homer Simpson.

Tony Scully and Wiekens apart, the skill level of the others is the equivalent of mild into which a disrep-

utable landlord has dumped

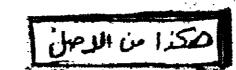
the previous night's slops. And commitment? Paul Dickov is exempt from any criticism because his dedication to the cause is beyond question. Wiekens, Kit Symons, Scully and Barry Conion cannot be faulted for effort. But the rest make things go with a swing in the same way that a pickling jar of cirrhosis-riddled liver would

aid the sale of hard liquor. Is there any hope? Any pattern of play developing? Any emerging stars?

Scully and Conlon have potential, wiichael Brown and Jeff Whitley have promise, but the team are changed every week, tactics altered virtually every match.

Denis Smith, the manager of Oxford United, said a point against City was a poor result. At first outraged, I realised that the League table is temperamental and the and the match itself showed that he is right. That, more than the fact that such giants as Stockport, Crewe, Bury and Bradford are above us, those alcopops, all flashy is the true indication of our

present position. This session has already become a wake. This season, young as it is, is already dead.



Self-styled élite obliged to justify their grand claims

Phil Show looks at a weekend of Premiership action that presents the Big Five with vastly differing challenges, while Nick Harris (below) analyses the programme match by match.

Five years after they helped to form the Big Five and became prime movers in setting up the Premiership, the powers of Merseyside and north London tangle this weekend. Portentous as the games at Goodison Park and Highbury may prove, a home victory at Old Trafford would strengthen the suspicion that Manchester United are now in a league of their own: the Big One.

By virtually any criterion resources, revenue, squad depth, silverware, support ~ United have left their rivals standing. The only area in which their pre-eminence is not currently pronounced is points. A lead of one offers secondplaced Blackburn Rovers the opportunity to take over at the top by beating them tomorrow.

Unfortunately for all who prefer a race to a procession, Alex Ferguson's team give the impression of being ready to accelerate away now their place in the Champions' League quarter-finals is secure. Even when amassing 26 goals in six games, United have seemed to be holding something in reserve.

Blackburn, in contrast, were stretched to the limit in scraping past Everton and Chelsea, and will need to scale new heights just to stay with the champions. They have not won at United for 35 years and boast a solitary, Alan Shearer-inspired success in the 17 ensuing encounters.

They have, however, run them sufficiently close in this ton overcame Liverpool, he fixture (two draws, two 1-0 de- said the derby was "the easy

better than any keeper in the country, and Chris Sutton is in the kind of form that could exploit Gary Pallister's increasing vulnerability.

But even allowing for the

tactical nous of Roy Hodgson, who is arguably outstripping Arsène Wenger as the most astute coach to come to England from abroad, it may not be enough. Hodgson is taking only his 16th Premiership match, against a mere 443 for Ferguson, and is likely to be left part of his learning curve.

No such luxuries for Howard Kendall, Before Ever-

courage optimism. What is is the key". What has happened more, Tim Flowers is playing is a sequence of defeats which mean they receive Tottenham as the buttom club.

Everton's incentive is not unlike Blackburn's. By seeing off Spurs they could trade places with them, and on Christian Gross' debut as manager to boot. The Swiss showed a historical bent when he flourished names like Harry Hotspur and the Earl of Northumberland, yet he may be unaware of positive auguoes from the more recent past.

In the autumn of 1958, Bill to reflect on the afternoon as Nicholson took charge of an ailing Spurs for the first time... against Everton. They triumphed by no less than 10-4 and within three years the nine points adrift, effectively Double came to White Hart turning tomorrow's match at

launched his reign with an astounding victory over Everton, 4-1 away on the first day of 1984-85, even if it was Kendall who won the title.

The way Everton's season has gone, survival would represent success for a club whose badge decrees that nothing but the best is good enough. Anything less than three points may provoke protests against the chairman, Peter Johnson, who dug himself into a deeper hole with ill-judged criticism of supporters this week.

By their neighbours' standards, Liverpool are hardly in crisis. But Antield compares itself with Old Trafford; humiliation by Barnsley left them feats in the last four) to en- one-what happens afterwards Lane. Peter Shreeves also Arsenal and the visit of Unit- a match likely to have a strong

Savo Milosevic celebrates his equaliser for Aston Villa against Everton last weekend. Villa went on to wha 2-1, one of only

utes which could make or third place in midweck, but with break both their season and Roy Evans' managerial terrire.

Arsenal, having sandwiched a fortnitous win over United between surrenders at Derby and Sheffield, also face a test of their resilience. Dennis Bergkamp's return could be the spark they need - Ian Wright looked forlorn without him - whereas Liverpool have Robbie Fowler and Paul Ince suspended when they need them most.

While the financial clout of Chelsea and Newcastle would conceivably put them in an updated Big Five, only by winning the big one, the championship. would their membership look anything more than transitory. Chelsea, who take on Derby in

ed a week today into 180 min- . Italian influence, crept into five defeats already can afford to lose three more at most to have any hope of finishing top.

Newcastle's could move to within a point of the leaders if they won their games in hand. Their prospects of doing so might be brighter if Kenny Dalglish, knowing he had lost Alan Shearer, had not hastily officaded Les Ferdinand and Peter Beardsley.

Crystal Palace's failure to win at home since April offers Newcastle hope on their retreat from Catalonia. Nevertheless, to study Palace's away record, which is comfortably the best in the Premiership, is to be reassured in this era of self-proclaimed élites that small can still be bountiful.



Barnsley v Leeds

Leading scorer

Barnsley manager Danny Wilson has a fully-fit squad to choose from for the first time this season, with the exception of long-term casualties Neil Thompson and Steve Davis. Winger Andy Liddell has recovered from an ankle injury and is fit. Wilson is likely to name an unchanged line-up for the Yorkshire derby from the side that beat Liverpool I-0 last week, although Adie Moses could make way in idfield for Jovo Bosancic. Barnsley are looking for only their second home win of the season.

Leeds will again be without captain David Hopkin and teenage striker Harry Kewell. Midfielder Hopkin is serving the second game of a three-match ban after accruing five bookings, while Kewell is on international duty in Australia for the World Cup play-off second leg with Iran. Teenage goalkeeper Paul Robinson will again act as understudy for Nigel Martyn as Mark Beeney remains unavailable with a hamstring injury. Leeds could move, at least temporarily, into the top three for the first time this season if they win.



Bolton v Wimbledon

Leading scorer



Chris Fairdough could make a Premiership return after a seven-month absence for Bolton today. Full-back Fairclough, who suffered knee ligament damage on the last day of last season, was Wanderers' only er-present last season and has undergone a lengthy recovery programme since Bolton re-entered the top flight. Scott Sellars returns after a three-match suspension, but defender Gerry Taggart is still serving a ban. Dean Holdsworth faces his former club for the first

Wimbledon face a Bolton side that beat them in the Coca: Cola Cup: earlier this season. Midfielder Robbie Earle, who lost his place in the side when he went on international duty with Jamaica, may return to the starting line-up. If he does, it is likely to be in the place of Cerr Hughes, who is due to start a three-match ban next v Defender Alan Kimble may also start after recovering from a hamstring injury, while Efan Ekoku is hoping to have recovered from a twisted ankle. Norwegian Stole Solbakken could play.



Chelsea v Derby

Ruud Gullit's squad system will be tested today. Eddie Newton (broken toe) and Graeme Le Saux (arm) are both definitely out. Steve Clarke (calf), Mark Nicholls (groin), Andy Myers (heel) and Tore Andre Flo (foot) are all on the doubtful list, although Frenchman Bernard Lambourde is available again after suspension. Frank Leboeuf, who missed Wednesday's 2-0 win over Everton with a groin probism, should be fit, and Mark Hughes is likely to partner Gianfranco.

Derby captain Igor Stimac will not return for the Rams until next week after nearly two months out with an acute back injury. The 30-year-old Croatian defender was back in training this week but is not ready to replace the Dane Jacob Laursen, who will be out for several weeks with a knee injury. With Stimac's return delayed, Dean Yates will make his first Premiership appearance of the season after recovering from a knee tendon injury. Paulo Wanchope will again lead the attack that helped beat Coventry 3-1 last week.



Coventry v Leicester

Coventry's Damen Huckerby is back to full fitness for today. Former England Under-21 striker Huckerby has been struggling for weeks with ankle and thigh injuries but is now fully recovered. Willie Boland is expected to replace Paul Williams in midfield while David Burrows keeps his place despite being on the verge of a move to Sheffield Wednesday. Coventry are looking to avoid the same result as their last Midlands derby - last week's 3-! defeat at Derby. Undefeated at home this season, they have drawn six of eight at Highfield Road, Striker Emile Heskey is suspended for Leicester. Midfielder Garry Parker has not trained all week due to the illness of his prematurely born daughter, and is very unlikely to play. Pontus Kaamark is suffering from a mystery illness which could open up a place in the starting line-up for youngster Stuart Wilson. This Midlands derby kes place under a superstition Leicester will hope to end - Coventry midfielder Gary McAllister has never been on a losing side against



Crystal Palace v Newcastle

harrio 3 Leading scores Last season: No fixture

the Foxes in the seven years since he left Filbert Street.

Andy Roberts needed stitches in his instep following Monday's victory over Spurs at White Hart Lane, but he should play wi painkilling injection. Michele Padovano suffered a dead leg in game but trained yesterday and is fit. Steve Coppell is likely to name an unchanged side as Palace still seek their first home win of the season (apart from the "away" win against Wimbledon on their shared ground). Neil Smith is one possible change, available again after suspersion, while Jamie Smith may be recalled after a ban.

Newcastle are likely to be without centre-back Darren Peacock who injured an ankle in the Champions' League defeat at Barcelona, while captain Rob Lee might recover from a virus which kept him out of that game. Faustino Aspnilla is still short of match fitness and unlikely to feature, but John Beresford and Steve Watson seem to have recovered from knocks. Newcastle will be lifted by the return of Northern Ireland winger Keith Gillespie who missed out in Sarcelona, serving a one-match ban after yellow cards in Europe.

...And statistics

How the first blow usually leads to a knockout

Managers often talk about the importance of the first goal. No wonder, statistics show that in recent seasons there has been only a one in 10 chance of a Premiership side scoring first and going on to

Over the years the figures have been remarkably consistent, with between 10 and 11 per cent of matches being won by sides that have gone behind. Last season only 33 out of 380 Premiership matches

only 33 out of 380 Premiership matches finished this way.

Not surprisingly, the chances of teams recovering to win are even smaller when playing away from home. This season only four teams have won away games after going behind: West Ham at Barnsley on the opening day of the season, and Wimbledon at Barnsley, Arsenal at Chelsea and Derby at Sheffield Wednesday all in Septamber.

in contrast, three Premiership matches last weekend alone saw home sides fight back to win after trailing, Aston Villa beating Everton, Newcastle overcoming Southampton and Leads producing a stirder matches to be about 12 to 12 ring revival to beat West Harn 3-1. The pattern goes back many years. As long ago as the 1964-65 season the Football Association analysed 1,000 matches to discover the effect of the first goal. The survey showed that 10 per cent of home teams lost games after taking the lead, while nearly a quarter of away sides did

so.
Of the 133 "first goals" scored this season, 76 have been scored by home teams: 59 have gone on to win, 13 to draw and only four to lose. Of the 57 scored by away teams, 36 have gone on to win, 10 to draw and 11 to lose.
West Ham are the team with the worst record for hanging on to a lead. Harry Redknapp's side have lost three of the seven matches in which they have gone in front this season. Chelsea, Derby, Barnsel of the front this season. Chelsea, Derby, Barnsel of the seven matches in which they have gone in front this season. Chelsea, Derby, Barnsel of the seven matches in which they have today at Stamford Bridge - have the best records for scoring the first goal. No clues for guessing which team have never lost a Premiership game in which they have taken the lead. Manchester United have played 217 Premiership United have played 217 Premiership matches and have never gone on to lose a game - home or away - in which they

Effect of the first goal: Premiership 1997-98

	Games played	Times lead taken	Gone Wia		Draw	Matches won after conceding first goal			
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Derby	14	10	6	2	2	1	*		,#E
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Liverpool	14	9	6	3	0	0			100
Matr United	15	3	8	ð,	0	The two states and			
Arsenal	15	8	5	3	0	2	Statistics: Brian Stars		
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West Ham	14	7	7	7	3		Idday are re-		
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Premierskip this season when a team have won a game after failing behind

Taking the lead: the last three seasons									
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1997-98 Of which home side scored first goal	146 (133) 78	95 (72) 59 (78)	23 (17) 13 (17)	15 (11) 4 (5)					
Of which away side scored first goal	57	36 (63)	10 (18)	11 (19)					
1995-97	380 (339)	228 (67)	78 (23)	33 (10)					
1995-96	380 (353)	244 (69)	71 (20)	38 (11)					

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: HOW THEY STAND

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LEADING SCORERS Hartson (West Ham)

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Dublin (Coventry) Galfacher (Blackburn) Fowler (Liverpool) 15 Carbone (Sheffield Wednesday)

Everton v Tottenham

Carbinicum, Speed 5 Leading scores

Everton are likely to give a debut to Norwegian Under-21 international goalkeeper Thomas Myrhe, signed this week from Viking Stavanger. Neville Southall is struggling with a back injury. Howard Kendall must also decide whether to recall promising youngsters Danny Cadamarteri and John Oster to the starting line-up. The newcomer from Sheffield United, Mitch Ward, is likely to keep a midfield place after his debut in the 2-0 midweek defeat at Chelsea, while

fellow ex-Blade Carl Tiler may be given a debut today. Spurs are likely to drop David Ginola, after the 1-0 home defeat by Crystal Palace last Monday. Christian Gross's preferred 4-4-2 systern is less than ideal for Ginola's preferred free role behind the strikers. Strikers Chris Armstrong and Jose Dominguez are still injured, leaving an opening alongside Les Ferdinand for either Steffen Iversen or Rory Allen. Gary Mabbutt and Clive Wilson have been recalled to the squad, together with Ruel Fox and Colin Calderwood. Spurs have lost four Premiership matches in a row, as have Everton.



Southampton v Sheff Wed

Leading scorer Di Cario, Carbone 7

Southampton have Egil Ostenstad available, probably as a substitute, following a six-week absence with an ankle problem. Saints manager Dave Jones has a fully fit squad to choose from, but new signing Bjorn Johansen will not arrive from Norway until next week. The Saints are hoping to recover from two defeats, against Newcastle and Chelsea in the Premiership and Coca-Cola Cup respectively. Jones will probably start with David Hirst and Kevin Davies up front. Sheffield Wednesday manager Ron Atkinson is likely to name an unchanged line-up from the side that won last weekend 2-0 over. Arsenal. A swap deal involving Coventry's David Burrows and Welsh international Mark Pembridge failed to beat yesterday's noon deadline, but although Pembridge is still available, Atkinson has drafted liee Briscoe into the squad. He could turn to the 22-year-old instead if he chooses to omit Pembridge. Atkinson is reunited with two former Owls who have played under his management:



Carlton Palmer and David Hirst.

West Ham v Aston Villa

Leading scorer



West Ham are not yet able to recall former Newcastle striker Paul Kitson following surgery to repair a torn groin muscle, but he is nearly fit. Abou Samassi or Paulo Alves will continue to deputise. Harry Redknapp must decide whether to keep faith with fit-again goalkeeper Ludek Miklosko who returned from injury at Leeds on Sunday, as a surprise replacement for in-form Canadian Craig Forrest, but was blarned for two late goals which produced West Ham's defeat. Rio Ferdinand will be recalled after a calf strain.

Aston Villa's Ian Taylor reverts be being a spectator after his role in the 2-1 Uefa Cup defeat at Steaua Bucharest on Tuesday, serving a three-match ban. In the absence of Taylor, manager Brian Little is likely to move versatile Portuguese international Fernando Nelson back into midfield with Gary Charles slotting in at full-back. Little will also check on the fitness of Yugoslav international midfielder Sasa Curcic who has been out of the squad for the last two games because of a virus. He could win a place on the bench.



Arsenal v Liverpool Leading scorer Last season: 1-2



Dennis Bergkamp and Emmanuel Petit both return from suspensions for Arsenal but Ray Parlour is out with a knee injury. Patrick Vieira is injured and Steve Bould is suspended. Arsène Wenger is now likely to revert to a 4-4-2 line-up with Martin Keown and Tony Adams in defence and Gilles Grimandi left out. Options to replace Parlour are Stephen Hughes or Luis Boa Morte, which, in either case, would mean switching winger Marc Overmars from left to right. Patrik Berger could lose his place in the tomorrow's Liverpool side. Manager Roy Evans is likely to include a more defensive midfield man to play alongside Jamie Redknapp after the Berger filled the role in the 1-0 home defeat by Barnsley last week in place of Paul Ince. Ince and Robbie Fowler are still both suspended, so the inclusion of either Danny Murphy, Jamie Carragher or Micky Thomas is a possibility. Rob Jones is still unfit. Mark Wright, Phil Babb, Carragher, Thomas, Steve Harkness and Neil Ruddock all made successful comebacks from injury in the reserves on Thursday.



Man Utd v Blackburn





Manchester United face the only team to have denied them the Premiership title since its inception with one key player absent, as Paul Scholes begins a three-match suspension. Ronny Johnsen is likely to slot into midfield, with Henning Berg replacing him in the heart of the defence. Philip Neville complained of double vision after the victory over 3-0 Champions' League win over Kosice on Thursday and is the only injury doubt, although Alex Ferguson said he would be fit to play

Blackburn will again be without Colin Hendry and Martin Dahlin for tomorrow's top-of-the-table encounter. The international duo are still out with long-term injuries but there was good news for manager Roy Hodgson when both Kevin Gallacher and Tore Pedersen were both back in training and available for selection yesterday. Chris Sutton's new contract with Blackburn Rovers will keep him at the club for five more years and he will be hoping to make his first repayment on the investment by adding to his season's I! goals.



England show they are all in line during their preparation for today's match against South Africa at Twickenham, the third game of their four-Test autumn programme

Photograph: David Ashdow

Dallaglio's rallying cry for English ambition

Lawrence Dallaglio's colourful description of Gary Teichmann's Springbok team as a "wounded animal in rrenzy" paints an accurate picture of the danger facing England at Twickenham this afternoon.

Chris Hewett says the South Africans are back up to speed after a cathartic spell in the rugby union slow lane.

Ian McGeechan, the Lions coach on the high veldt last summer, famously depicted his victorious team's style of play as "15-man rugby without the ball". If England attempt to pull a similar stunt at Twickenham this afternoon, they will drown in a manager, also had something to sea of Springbok points; to beat say on the subject yesterday Phil de Glanville's absence help form against New Zealand and be pure nectar. Thanks to the

need Scott Gibbs and Neil Jenkins rather than Nick Green-

Africans are a very different kettle of trouble to the strangely one-dimensional unit on which the Lions poured lashings of Durban. Nick Mallett, the Richard Hill and the other Enghugely capable philosopher king from deepest Hertfordshire who of revenge in their nostrils. succeeded Carel du Plessis as national coach in September, has hit the ground running by restoring a sense of purpose and responsibility to the rich and Jake White, the Springboks' technical advisor, said this week: "We know where we're heading now. We're heading towards the World Cup in 1999."

Roger Utiley, the England

the world champions with a and it was not calculated to bring the cause. The Bath centre may England require something unprecedented demands of this strategy based on hostile tackling comfort and serenity to the not be the quickest thing on two similar from their captain on four-Test autumn programme, stock and Mike Catt. Besides, these South made the Boks more focused ball, Dick Muir and Andre Sny than ever," he admitted. man some of the same. Focused enough to stick 50odd points on the French in Paris last weekend. Focused enough cold water in Cape Town and to go after Lawrence Dallaglio, and the reshaped back row of

If expectations of an English victory over the All Blacks at Old Trafford were so low as to border on the subterranean, they are scarcely any higher this time diverse talents at his disposal. As round. Martin Johnson's aggression will be badly missed; if the Leicester lock's partiality towards the occasional cheap shot the north stand. If he does the has cost him a cap, it has also cost the English engine room its single most valuable piece of heavy machinery. Neither does

Much depends on the con-

Dallaglio, Hill and Neil Back. lish Lions today with the whiff If Garforth fails to neutralise the mighty Os du Randt by fair means or foul - Paul Wallace, the smiling Irish Lion, chose the latter course last summer and somehow got away with it - the English scrum will go back so quickly that the threequarters will find themselves calling. moves from the middle tier of business, though, the loose trio may well ask the Boks an manswerable question or two.

Dallaglio was in majestic

DOWN

to examine turbine (7) Very quick to take to an audience? (4,3,8) Very well-groomed, with

Opening for the men in

Drunk's threat to cloth-

ing? (3,5,3,4) A chance event left Chi-

na powerless (7) 13 Child, one locked in

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Where to get more fuel?

Coal-mine's best (3-4)

18 Subdues member of new

round Yard on various

hospital (4)

Lions felt more comfortable show the same ambition in the Leicester tight-head prop, defence, we're in for a cracking

game of rugby. "It's about results, yes, but it's about performance, too. We want to create scoring opportunities as well as deny those opportunities to the opposition."

For Clive Woodward and the rest of the England back--room team - a unit strengthened of the green. Will Dallaglio 'yesterday by the confirmation of and company win him some Phil Larder, the former Great Britain rugby league coach, in a For heaven's sake, don't bet full-time advisory role - victory over the South Africans would

home dressing room. "Psycho- legs, but he tackled himself to this occasion. Sensibly, he is not the new regime is still on honeylogically, the Lions' victory in the a standstill in Manchester last even contemplating a Lions- moon. No European side has summer may well work against weekend and was relishing the style exercise in barricade con- ever been exposed to such a us, because I get the feeling it has prospect of giving Henry Honi-struction. "There were times mountainous challenge, let during the summer when the alone a young and inexperienced English outfit still feeling without the ball than with it," its way in the big wide world. tribution of Darren Garforth, he conceded. "If England can However, a second successive defeat after an unsatisfying draw attack as the Lions showed in would send just a little unease seeping into the inner sanctum.

For the long-term sake of

England's national team, it is vital that Woodward holds his nerve; retains his vision and continues to back what is obviously a bold and adventurous line in rugby judgement. But for the sake of the coach's short-term sanity, he could do with the rub breathing space this afternoon? your pension on it.

Wales heed a warrior, Page 21

ENGLAND y SOUTH AFRICA											
at Twickenham											
PerryBath	1 15	P Montgomer	WProvince								
BentleyNewcastle	: 14] Small	WProvince								
GreenwoodLeicester	- 13	A Snyman	N Transvaal								
de GlanvilleBatt											
ReesSale											
CattBat											
DawsonNorthampton											
LeonardHarlequins											
CockerillLeicester	2	i Daiton	Gautene								
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Grewcock Saracens Archer Newcastle	· 4	M Andrews	Natal								
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HallSaracens	g	G Teichmann									
BackLeicester	7	A Venter	Froe State								
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Referee: CHawke (New Zealand) Kick-off: 2.0 (Sky Sports'2)

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THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3469. Saturday 29 November

Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution

ACROSS

- Landing-site boss is going 1 Chopper engineer starts Spoil nearly everything in 2 a marriage (7) Indifferent attitude to-
- wards computers etc? party system (7)
 5 Tune has mother hiding unexpected smile (7)
 6 Nothing to be found in 10 Dislike hurry, wasting sec-
- onds (4) 11 High-class stockist's first desire (5) 12 Undertake exercises to
- get drug info (4)
 15 Those people accepting a 7 charge for treatment (7) 16 Many set for release in this? (7)
- 17 Star, not quite elderly, resident in European city (7) 19 Redesigned University with help of prospective
- worker (7) 21 Time to copy a cassette (4) 22 Upset most of Yankee
- family (7)

 19 Year one's brought in to cut a heap of grass (7)

 20 Criminal leader getting country (5) 23 Small creatures surrounding one in battle (4)
 No-one's watching this art coalesce, possibly (3,5,2,5)
 levels (7)
 24 Make for the capital of Majorca (4)
- 27 Job on island for delivery 25 Observe first of cases in agent (7) 28 Affectionate, glowing
- family (7)

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hurdbacked copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4918, The Independent, I Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode Last week's winners: O Struncks, Coleraine; M Rippin, Market Drayton; D Hazeldine, Austwick; B Jones, London WC1; M Hicks, London NW2.

THIRTEEN PAGES OF SPORT START ON PAGE 16

Farewell Peter O'Sullevan: Greg Wood pays tribute as the voice of racing hangs up his microphone, page 18

Hello Bjorn Borg: John Roberts on the former Wimbledon champion, who competes in London

Welcome Back Chris Hewett talks to Neil Back on his return to the England rugby union team, page 21

IN MONDAY'S 20-PAGE SPORTS SECTION

Adam Hollioake, captain of the England cricket team playing in Sharjah next week, talks to Derek Pringle

Chris Hewett and David Llewellyn report from Twickenham on England v South Africa; Tim Glover and Ken Jones report from Wembley on Wales v

Matches of the day: Phil Shaw and Guy Hodgson watch Manchester United take on Blackburn; Glenn Moore sees Arsenal yersus Liverpool

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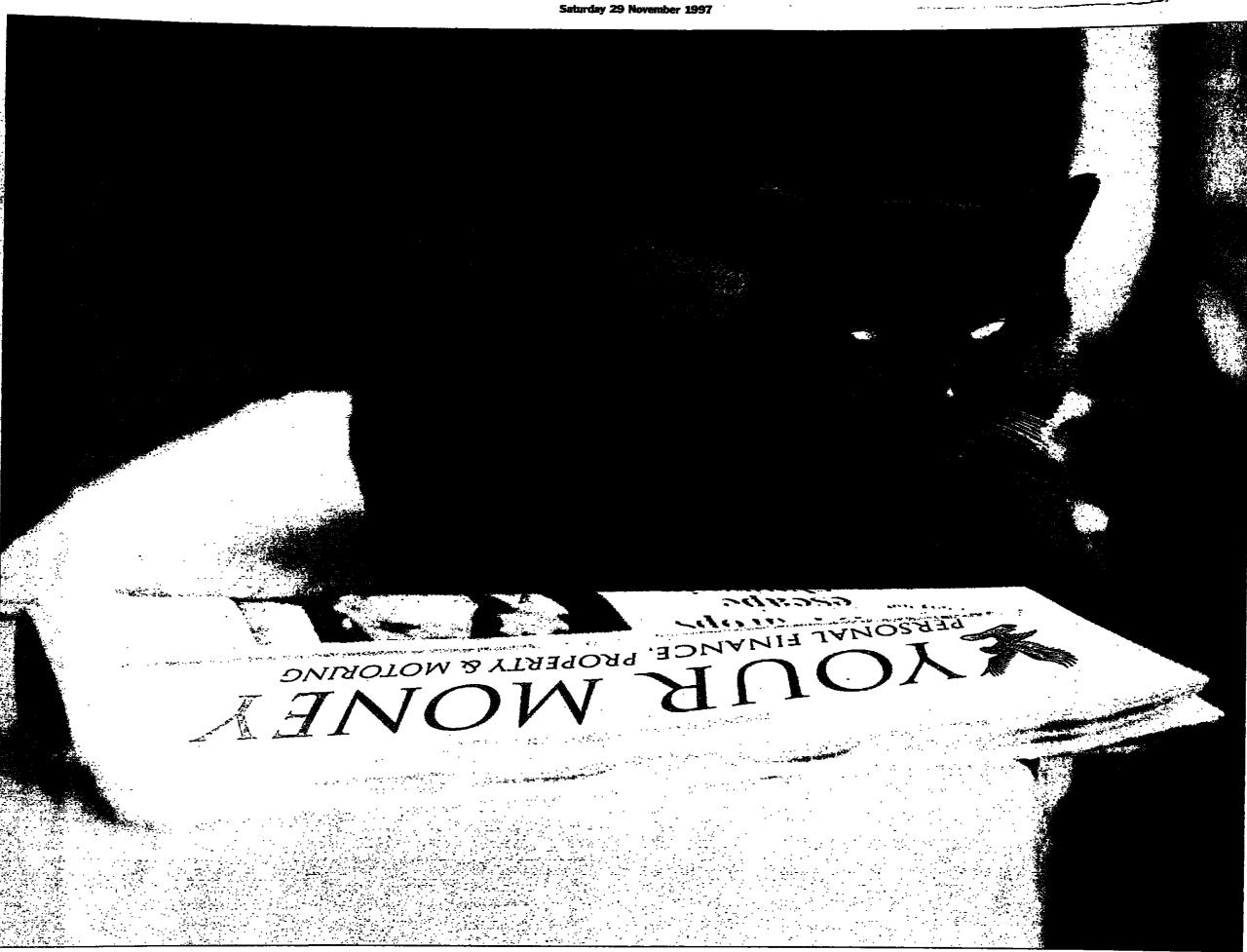
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PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

YOUR MONEY

PERSONAL FINANCE, PROPERTY & MOTORING



On the scent of success: Schrodinger the cat is still beating the benchmark index after another stock-picking session, making selections by choosing pieces of dried cat food from a numbered grid

he picked - Abbey National

and Great Universal Stores -

are among CAT's top per-

formers over the last quarter,

showing growth of 15.76 per

cent and 9.37 per cent respec-

Granada, whose shares grew by

Yorkshire Tyne Tees, one of

This fits in with Schro-

Photograph: Susannah Binney/Apex

A fund manager with nine lives

Stock market turmoil in the recent period has left many investment houses wondering how to deliver value to their clients. No such worries for Schrodinger, The independent's feline fund manager. As Paul Slade reports, our cat has survived the last three months with all nine lives intact.

and the second

Tracking fund managers' perforegains every few months can leave them feeling somewhat under the spotlight. Perhaps that is why shrodinger has not been as successful in the UK equity growths ector as he was when in smaller company stocks.

Even so, he has still shown a clean set of heels to the average benchmark index of the biggest 350 companies quoted on the Stock Exchange. And his performance still leaves investment experts open-jawed

Schrodinger makes his stock selections by choosing pieces of dried cat food from a numbered grid. In the year to August 12, his CAT small companies portfolio rose by 4.35 per cent, against just 3.25 per cent for the average fund

for the funds' benchmark index - an impressive performance.

At that point, we had him make some new selections, taking CAT into the UK equity growth sector. His first three months as an equity growth manager - a period which includes October's extraordinary stockmarket volatility - saw CAT fall by 0.53 per cent against the sector's average drop of 0.04 per cent. However, this still ranks the revised portfolio equal 79th in a field of 161 UK equity growth trusts.

Readers with units in Royal London's UK Growth Trust may like to know their own fund manager turned in an identical performance. Schrodinger remains ahead of Legal & General and Standard Life, two leading insurers whose funds have suffered even more from October's financial

dent financial adviser at London-based Chase de Vere, says Schrodinger's performance would cause him no undue concern. He says: "CAT would be a definite hold. Its performance is OK over the short term and seems to be quite good over the longer term. It doesn't seem to be particularly volatile. I think you have to say it's holding its own."

in the sector and 0.37 per cent decline of 0.53 per cent still leaves CAT well ahead of the FTSE 350 - the closest match as a benchmark index - which

> same period. portfolio in August 1996, the grid represented shares in the FTSE mid-250. When the time came to realign the portfolio, we dropped the 10 worst-performing small companies, and let him select 10 replacements from a FTSE 100 grid of the UK's biggest players. UK equity growth trusts can buy "Schrodinger's original small shares not only in the FTSE

250, but also the more impor-

Ian Millward, an indepen-

Schrodinger's three-month

tant FTSE 100 - an option Schrodinger did not previous-Two of the FTSE 100 shares

fell by 3.74 per cent over the When we first created the tively. Our top performer was 19.75 per cent in the last three months. Granada came into the portfolio when it took over companies picks, in July.

UK equity growth unit trusts, over 3 months to November 10, 1997, offer to-offer, not income re-invested.

Trust	3-month change	Ranking (161 funds)
Mercury Recovery	0.35%	75
Baring UK Growth	.0.37%	76
Tilney UK Equity		77
	0.47%	78
Royal London	٠.	
UK Growth	0.53%	79
CAT Portfolio	0.53%	. 79
Halifax Growth	0.56%	80
Abbey Assets and	·	_
Earnings	0.70%	. 81
Legal & General UK		·
Recovery	0.74%	82
Scottish Mutual		
Select Opps	0.77%	. 83
Standard Life UK	·	•
Equity Growth	0.79%	84
Source: Micropal/Independ	ent.	•

going for a portfolio which is overweight in financials, retailers and media, but underweight in sectors such as

engineering. Richard Carlyle, a pension fund manager at Henderson Touche Remnant, says: "It's a sensible split. If you were advertising yourself as an upmarket, high fee-charging fund manager, and came up with this portfolio, you certainly couldn't be laughed at."

It is worth remembering that Schrodinger also underperformed as a small companies manager in his first quarter, but managed to turn the situation round as the year went on. His first-quarter performance in the UK equity growth sector will also have suffered from the dealing charges incurred when he sold his worst small companies stocks and bought the FTSE 100 ones.

The worst-performing unit trust in the UK equity growth sector over the past three months is Canada Life's Canlife General Trust, which lost 7.23 per cent of its value over the period. The top performer was Johnson Fry's Slater Growth Trust, which grew by 10.33 per cent. Johnson Fry may have been forced to issue a profits warning a week ago, but they've evidently got a smarter cat than we have.

Thought for the day

28,000 financial products. 4,000 mortgages. 164 unit trust companies. Or I phone call. Yes please I think I'd like to know more about talking to an IFA. Please send me m

INSIDE

3/JOHN WINDSOR Puzzling over jigsaws
5/JONATHAN DAVIS
Mind your Qs 9/PENNY JACKSON The lure of the country Move without trauma 10/ROSALIND RUSSELL 12/GAVIN GREEN On the big screen

11/ROBERT LIEBMAN Why I voted for the Alfa

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What Brown didn't mention

NIC CICUTTI

ponderable is what Iron The Green Budget may have Laddie wants to do with inbeen good from the point of view of pensioners, who will heritance tax. The current now receive enhanced cold £215,000 limit, plus good tax advice, combine to ensure weather payments. Parents who will now be able to enthat all bar about 15,000 esroll their kids in one of the tates each year scrape under 30,000 planned out-of-school the net. clubs will also raise a cheer. In the run-up to last Tuesday, the air was thick with

But there was precious little in it to excite those of us who may have wanted to base our investment or borrowing decisions on what the Chancellor, Gordon Brown. had to say earlier this week.

The Iron Chancellor - or however, that Mr Brown Iron Laddie, as some would have said anything on tabloids would have him inheritance tax at this stage. called - said nothing about Again, I'd be prepared to the new Individual Savings stick a small wager on this Account (ISA), which one coming up in a few months' time. Look out for Labour intends to replace PEPs and Tessas in 1999. potential exempt transfers being raised from seven to 10

Draft proposals will be published on Tuesday though, so by next weekend we should all have a better idea of whether to keep our money in existing PEPs and Tessas, or switch to the ISA.

Nor did Mr Brown give even a hint of what the Government intends to do about mortgage interest rate relief (Miras), the tax subsidy currently paid on the first

£30,000 of most mortgages. investment trusts, whose He may not have said anyshares have been trading well thing this time (would you, below net asset values, may after four mortgage rate rises now find it more easy to narin the past seven months?), row that gap. In the past but I'd still be willing to wager a small amount that the March Budget will see a drop in Miras relief from 10 per cent in April to 5 per cent the following year, or even its

complete abolition. Perhaps the greatest im-

warnings of what might hap-

pen if the Laddie were to

take an axe to some of the

scams that help people avoid

years, or a limit of, say,

£500,000 or £1m being

some heavy-duty tax avoid-

ance loopholes in a wide

range of areas finally being

vestors flowing from the decision to scrap advance

corporation tax (ACT) is that

One small benefit to in-

More the point, look at

placed on them.

boredom factor.

plugged.

It was always unlikely,

paying death duties.

MONEY MAKEOVER

The financial facts of married life

Age: 41

Occupation: School bursar year, while his fiances carns £16,000. He has a £54,000 mortgage on a property that cost £65,000 in Pebruary and may now be worth £75,000. The mortgage is backed by two with profits endowment policies, one maturing in 2009 and the other in 2016. He also owns 450 Woolwich shares

He has £10,500 invested in an M&G investment trust which has a wind-up date of 2002, which he is concerned about because of its relative under-performance, plus £4,000 savines in a building society. His fiancée also has a similar amount in a society account.

The couple are both members of their respective occupational pension schemes. They have no outstanding loans and estimate that after setting up home together they will have a monthly "surplus" of £450, although they are also considering starting a family, in which case they might need to move to a larger house, potentially costing £100,000.

Mr Grove is considering investing for capital growth, possibly through direct investment in the stock market, looking 12 to 17 years ahead.

The adviser: James Bruce, financial planner and independent financial adviser. Corporate and

Name: Paul Grove Personal Planning, Highwoods Square, Highwoods, Colchester, Essex CO44BB (01206841176). The problem Mr Grove, who The advice: First, you have a is 41, earns about £25,000 a need for an adequate fund in case of emergencies. You already have £4,000 in a Nationwide Postal Account. This offers a superior rate of interest to equivalent branch-based accounts. I would recommend that you continue with this.

On the protection front, the two endowment policies contain life cover to pay off the mortgage loan in the event of your death. You also have death in service benefits of twice your salary in the event of death. Given that you have no dependents, at present you have no need for further life cover.

If you were unable to work for reasons of ill-health or accident, you would receive six months' full pay. I would recommend that you insure against this happening to you. Replacement of earnings cover paying £16,000 a year (about 64 per cent of current income) would cost £29 a month, assuming a 52-week deferment period.

You also have no protection in the event of a sudden serious illness - such as cancer, stroke or a heart attack - which you then survive. Critical illness cover pays a lump sum on diagnosis of a range of illnesses. The cost of such cover, which could be used to pay off the £54,000 mortgage loan in the event of illness, would be £30-£35 a month.

Paul Grove, who plans to marry next year, needs to consider some extra insurance cover

Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

The pension scheme you belong to is a good one, with index-linked-benefits based on your final salary and years of service. I recommend that you re-

main a member of this scheme. One eventuality you have mentioned is marriage to your fiancée next year. Typically, the costs of a wedding can be up to £10,000. This would make a significant dent in your savings.

After marriage the professional drafting of a will becomes vital, otherwise normal intestacy

laws will apply. With a will you can determine where you wish your inheritance to go.

Buying a new property at £100,000 will require extra funds of £35,000, assuming the sale of your existing one at £75,000. You are concerned that, jointly with your fiancée, mortgaging yourself to the hilt may not be sensible. I suggest putting down the largest deposit possible, using

the financial resources you already have at your disposal. The shortfall above can be partly financed through the equity of £21,000 in your property, the existing PEP investment and your 450 Woolwich shares, leaving a gap of about £4,000. To meet this, I would suggest that any surplus income continues to be paid into your

Nationwide account for the

foreseeable future. Although I agree that equity investment is the best option for long-term financial returns. I am not convinced that buying shares directly is the most sensible way to gain such exposure. Given your relatively low tesources at present, pooled investments - such as unit and investment trusts - that spread risk are a better alternative. Given that you may require it to help finance the new property, I would suggest that you do not transfer the M&G investment trust into another fund at present, irrespective of its current disappointing performance. You might incur expensive initial charges to little purpose.

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The product: Commercial Union's Premier Investment

ACT ensured that share buy-Bond. The deal: Invest at least £2,500 backs, one way of reducing the discount, were inefficient. in the bond and Commercial So, all in all, what's the Union will "guarantee" to pay a verdict? Five out of 10 for return of 9 per cent in the first what he said and two out of year. Investors putting in more 10 for not relieving the than £5.000 can also receive a small regular income from the investment, rising with age.

Plus points: The return beats most investment bonds available and charges, at first glance, appear to be pared to the bone. CU has drooped the usual initial charge (bid/offer spread). A policy charge of 0.08 per cent per month looks like good value.

Commercial Union has been very successful at marketing investment products such as this

bond because advisers believe the company can support its products from a sound financial

For wealthy investors putting more than £50,000 into the bond, CU will actually invest more than the fund is worth, or 102 per cent of the money put

Drawbacks and risks: The duction from the fund. The in their investment should avoid

"guaranteed" return is eye- company says it has never apcatching, even when it only applies for a year. However, CU is not guaranteeing anything with regard to the investor's capital. If the securities in which CU's life fund invests - mostly UK equities - fall in value then CU reserves the right to apply a market value adjuster, a straight de-

plied this. However, pressure for it to do so is likely to increase if the present volatility in the stock market turns into a downward slide or a crash.

The charges are not quite as good as they first appear. Investors who are not 100-per-cent certain they will not need to cash

this because there are hefty surrender penalties of up to 9 per cent for early encashment. And the 0.08 per cent per month fee translates into a charge of more than 1 per cent a year, this is where CU's profit comes from. Verdict: Solid for those who already have solid finances:

Marks out of five: Three. -Andrew Verity



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Schroders

SATURDAY

COLLECT TO INVEST

Pick up the pieces cheaply

Sniff, sniff. If the wooden holes. Otherwise, how will you collecting, but most are rela-most renowned maker of jigsaw puzzle in the junk shop smells a bit musty or damp, it's good news. It has probably been preserved in an attic or cellar, with all its pieces intact. And if it is a big, 1,000-piece puzzle, it is more likely to be intact than smaller ones - big ones were so daunting that they were consigned to the attic sooner rather than later. John Windsor picks up the pieces

Now is the time to scour your attic for 20th century wooden jigsaw puzzles. Earlier, handsown jigsaws have long been recognised as collectable antiques. But with the publication on 9 December of Tom Tyler's comprehensive guide. British Jigsaws of the Twentieth Century. the jigsaws that father and grandfather used to make will

(ger tage)

become more sought after. They have hitherto been a relatively unrecognised and undervalued collectable. The auction market for them is narrow and prices are stable - for the same reason, odd though it may seem, that prices for horse- would be lucky to pick one up drawn carriages are stable. Only horse riders buy carriages and only puzzle-doers buy puzzles.

know whether your charity shop

find is intact? A puzzle worth £200 or more at auction - such as the rare 200-piece Great Western Making" made by Chad Valley hetween 1936 and 1939 - can drop in value by a half or two thirds if one or more pieces is suffers a similar drop in value.

Locos in the Making, showing a party of schoolchildren apparently about to be crushed by a tank engine on an overhead hoist at GWR's Swindon workshop, is typical of the images that sell best.

Transport is the thing: express trains, ocean liners, aeroplanes - the sort of Cor-whoosh! juggernauts that set schoolboys' pulses racing before the space age.

It is not surprising that the higgest auction markets for jigsaw puzzles are transport linked. Puzzles realise their full "cross-over" value if sold at lan Wright's Sheffield Railwayana Auctions, at the Romsey Auction Rooms, which sells model railways and vehicles, or in one of Bonhams' Chelsea toy sales.

A complete GWR "Locomotives in the Making" fetched an unusually hefty £480 at a sale by Sheffield Railwayana Auctions in Hendon in May. You for under £225, its going rate.

But complete, good-condition puzzles in the same GWR Love it or loathe it, there is series regularly sell at auction no avoiding trying to slot those for only £30-£50. GWR may be little "necks" into the right the must-have of jigsaw puzzle

tively common and most established puzzle collectors already own all but the rarest of the 40 or so in the series. There rare 200-piece Great Western seems to be a glut of Railway's "G.W. Locos in the GWR/Chad Valley's The Romans at Caerleon and Brazenose College Oxford, at around £30 each.

acrylic colours.

He uses balsa-backed ply-

wood that is easily sanded down

to the level of the surrounding

honestly on the back. "I restore

the picture, not the puzzle", he

says. The restoration of a lost

piece or two will not restore

more than two-thirds of the val-

ue of a puzzle at the most. But

puzzles. The smell of newly

sawn plywood warned him

against buying one that a dealer

jigsaw puzzle specialist Brian

Lee has an antidote to the lost-

piece problem - a number of

knowledgeable vendors, many

of them women, who pay as lit-

tle as 20p for jigsaw puzzles in

junk and charity shops and

hoot sales, assemble them, wrap

them in cling film for display at

auction - then watch them

puzzle with an expensive title

unless it was made up. Who

would gamble even a quarter of

of finding it intact? Many col-

lectors, he reports, simply will

not buy incomplete puzzles.

You can buy loose puzzles at his

sales, including run-of-the-mill

cardboard ones, for around £20

for a lot of half a dozen or more.

Cautionary tale for the im-

Mr Lee would not offer a

fetch £20 or £100 or £200.

insisted was antique.

It is Mr Cooper who sniffs

At Romsey Auction Rooms,

at least it will look perfect.

The astute collector will exmissing. Without its box it plore new territory. Why, for example, are Pears puzzles, even the quintessentially Victorian "Bubbles" picture, still changing hands at only £15-£30?

The collector David Cooper cherishes his deliciously decadent Salome Dances Before Herod, a 600-piece puzzle published by Holtzapsfel in about 1905. It sells for £50-£80. Its pieces are all of different shapes and it is a swine to make up.

Apart from that, very little known about Holtzapifel, a German engineering company that settled in London and began making quality jigsaws solely to demonstrate its super new jigsaw. Author Tom Tyler has a trade list of theirs, but the publisher of their prints is not

Will more collectors specialise in Holtzapffel, do some research - and push up prices? As a start, Mr Tyler's book brings to light some splendid Holtzapffels, including Salome its complete value in the hope and a Queen Cleopatra with edges that follow her outline. Many manufacturers' archives have been chucked into builders' skips. Tuck's were destroyed in the blitz.

Mr Cooper, a builder, has a sideline - he is the country's

replica jigsaw pieces. Lend him the pieces surrounding the vacant spot and, for a fiver, he will cut a precise replica and his wife, Val, will paint it using pieces and shows up clearly and

Cleopatra, in a jigsaw by a German engineering company

p&p £1, credit card callers post-

free. David Cooper (01227

742222), Romsey Auction Rooms

(01794-513331). Sheffield Rail-

wayana Auctions (lan Wright

0114-274 5085). Bonhams

Chelsea (0171-393 3906).

patient: three conscientious T.419 OLE (01460-240044), £22, staff at Bonhams, leading London auctioneers in jigsaw puzzles, spent a total of 45 hours assembling five boxed GWR puzzles - including the sought-after Locos in the Making - before offering them in last month's sale.

Locos in the Making, complete but with three pieces broken, sold for £138, three sold for £39, £46 and £63 and the fifth, The Fishguard Army, a fishing scene, damaged, failed to sell.

Tom Tyler is founder of The Benevolent Confraternity of Dissectologists (01473-723458). His British Jigsaw Puzzles of the Twentieth Century' is published by Richard Dennis, The Old Chapel, Shepton Beauchamp, Somerset

LOOSE CHANGE

The Sheperds Friendly Society is offering three stars in the constellation Ursa Major as prizes in a competition. Winners will be able to name a star after themselves or anyone they choose. Entrants will be required to name the greatest wish they can make for the person after whom they would name the star. Call 0800 526249 for an entry form. Skipton Building Society is launching two fixed-rate bonds. Both will pay 7.3 per cent gross, either over one or

end of year one and at maturity. Call 0800 446776. NetPEP the provider of a FT-SE 100 tracker fund offered on the Internet, is offcring to waive all initial charges on investments made before december 31. The PEP has annual charges of 0.35 per cent. Access to the NetPEP website

two years. On the two-year

bond, interest is paid at the

is on: www.netpep.co.uk Birmingham Midshires is launching a savings account, the Double Bonus Bond, which splits the investment between a variable rate of return, linked to Bank of England base rates, and the FT-SE 100 share index. The bond pays a return of up to 7.5 per cent on the variable half of the investment and is guaranteed to match base rates until January 1999. The stock market element guarantees a minimum of 20 per cent, up to a maximum of 100 per cent. Call 01902,302323. Leeds & Holbeck Boilding Society is offering visitors to its new Internet site the chance to win cross-Channel ferry crossings from Dover or Portsmouth in a free monthly prize draw. Access is on: www.leeds-holbeck.co.uk Colonial, the financial services provider, has re-priced its standard term assurance rates. A non-smoking male aged 30 next birthday now pays £7.85 a month for £50,000 of cover over 25 years, compared to £8.72 from Allied Dunbar or £11.50 from Prudential. Call 0800 828501.

Pearl, the insurance company, is cutting from 6 to 4 per cent the initial charges on investments into its range of unit trusts and PEPs, including its Equity Income and Equity Growth trusts. Annual management charges are 1.5 per cent Call Leo Thomas or Ruth Weighill on 0171



INTERNET INVESTOR

ROBIN AMLOT Looking for a loan on-line

Base interest rates went up earlier this month - you robably noticed. However, you may not have noticed the trickle of increases in rates by various mortgage lenders. Many building societies say they will hold their standard variable mortgage rates unchanged at least until the end of this year. Most of the bank mortgage lenders have already put their mortgage rates up.

If you want to know exactly why the Bank of England decided to raise interest rates, the minutes of the Monetary Policy Committee meeting held on November 5-6 will be published on December 10 and you will be able to read them for yourself on the Bank's website.

But what of mortgage rates? Who is offering the best deal and how long for? A new website, Moneynet, offers an independent interactive service, Mortgage Finder, which lists rates, discounts, conditions and special offers from more than 80 mortgage lenders. Details of mortgage rates and offers are updated daily.

Using Mortgage Finder, you can review fixed rate, discounted, capped or variable rate mortgages, those offering a cashback or any mix of the above. In ad- prices and mortgage arrears. dition to interest rates, a full breakdown is available for each product, highlighting relevant information such as early redemption penalties, any insurance insisted upon by the lender and any arrangement fees charged.

a section on FAOs (frequently asked questions) and will have a mortgage calculator, which is currently being built. It is best viewed using Microsoft's Internet Explorer rather than Netscape Navigator, the other main web browser. In future, the site aims to include information about conveyancers and insurers.

While you can search for a mortgage on the world wide web, you still cannot yet arrange one on-line. However, the Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML), the trade body which represents lenders accounting for about 98 per cent of all the mortgages in the UK, is now weighing up the feasibility of mortgage trading being carried out electronically by intermediaries - financial advisers - still one step removed from consumers.

Meanwhile, the CML has launched its own website which contains information on its members and provides links to lenders' websites. It offers consumer information in the shape of guides to buying a home in England and Wales and buying a home in Scotland. The site also contains a range of consumer factsheets, press releases and statistical data on house

Though you cannot arrange a mortgage on-line, there is now a mortgage account that you can manage on the web. It is Legal & General's Flexible Reserve Mortgage, which, in early 1995, was the first flexible mortgage to be offered in the UK. L&G has

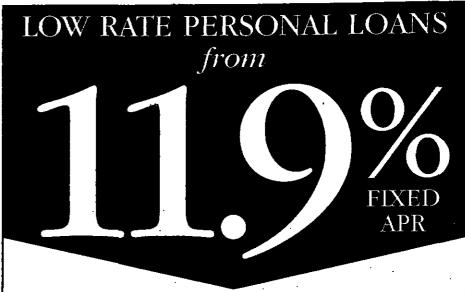
Moneynet is a work-in-progress. The site includes | launched InterPlan, an interactive approach to manang money on the internet and as a first step i

offering an on-line mortgage management service. The Flexible Reserve Mortgage allows you to make extra payments, at any time, to reduce the outstanding mortgage and create an available reserve. It offers a competitive variable rate of interest, which L&G promises will never be more than 1.5 per cent above bank base rates. The rate is currently 7.7 per cent, equivalent to an APR of 8.0 per cent.

Using InterPlan you can see at a glance your outstanding mortgage. Statements are updated daily and list your last five lump sum transactions, your current mortgage balance and the amount available to you in your available reserve. You can also submit transaction requests, arranging to make lump sum payments, amend or instruct an additional monthly payment, take a payment holiday or borrow back money from your available reserve.

There is also a personal planner calculator which allows you to see the effect of making mortgage overpayments, borrowing from your Available Reserve or taking payment holidays.

Bank of England: www.bankofengland.co.uk Moneynet: www.moneynet.co.uk Council of Mortgage Lenders: www.cml.org.uk Legal & General InterPlan: www.legal-and-general.



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\$2,000	18.8%	21.9%	20.9%	15.9%	

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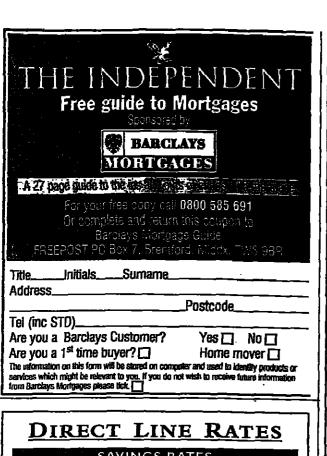
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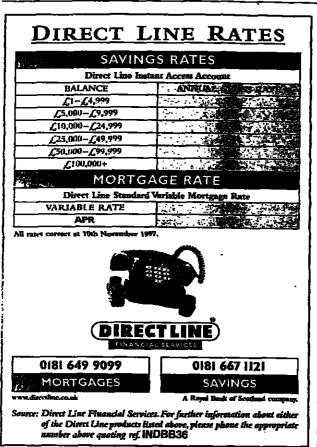
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ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT.



In some ways, the collapse of Japan's fourth largest bank should be welcomed

Both sides of the inflation Interestingly all were based versus deflation argument on the same street in Tokyo, England Inflation Report. ternative premises. The Labour market is tightening, with shortages ap- few brokers who are none too

The collapse of Yamaichi problems facing South Korea who argue that deflation re- business is transacted. mains the dominant threat. Scotland is just one example have downgraded their growth forecasts sharply. The restrictions accompanying the IMF rescue package in South Korea will not help either.

But there is comfort to be gained from news emanating from the Orient. The relative calm with which markets lapse of Japan's fourth largest stockbroker is encouraging. At the very least it shows confidence in the authorities' ability to manage the situation. Indeed, in some ways the collapse many years ago such a major financial problem might have been swept under the carpet. Yamaichi is the third

received a fillip this week. now not surprisingly nick-Those who believe rising named Tosan-Dori, or Bankprices are the real danger will ruptcy Row. No doubt other have had their fears con- brokers sharing this address firmed by the latest Bank of are even now looking for al-Back home there are a

pearing not just amongst pleased with the Stock Exskilled workers. Those un- change. Problems remain fortunate employees of with the electronic order Yamaichi should have little book, which is still failing to difficulty in finding new em- achieve the penetration into ployment in the Square Mile. share trading originally envisaged. Prices during the and more importantly the first bour of trading remain unreliable, but this is when - must add weight to those the bulk of execution-only

The prices struck for these The delay to Hyundai's £3bn trades can be as much as 15 per semiconductor project in cent adrift from those that apply once the market has setof how the problems afflict-ing the Tigers may have toyed with the idea of allowknock-on effects. Analysis ing a delay before these orders were carried out, but has abandoned these plans, preferring to recommend the adoption of price limits instead.

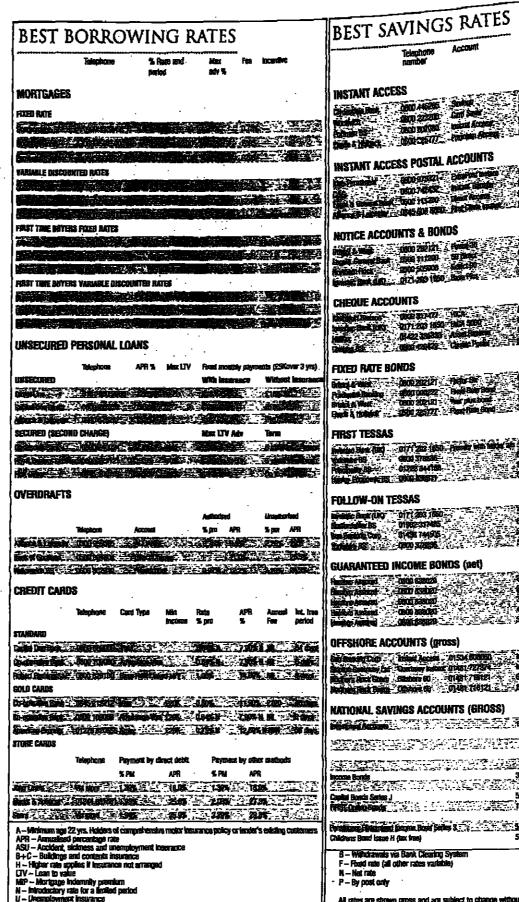
Execution-only brokers considered this unsatisfactory. Educating clients to use limits sensibly will add to their costs and risks remain that orgreeted the news of the col- ders will not be carried out, or more than one attempt will be made to transact what should otherwise be simple business.

With a number of traders now curtailing their link with the electronic order book to avoid highly volatile periods should be welcomed. Not so at the beginning and end of the day, both prices and index levels cannot be relied upon.

Brian Tora is chairman of Japanese financial institu- Greig Middleton's investment tion to fold in as many weeks. strategy committee

Sunalliance

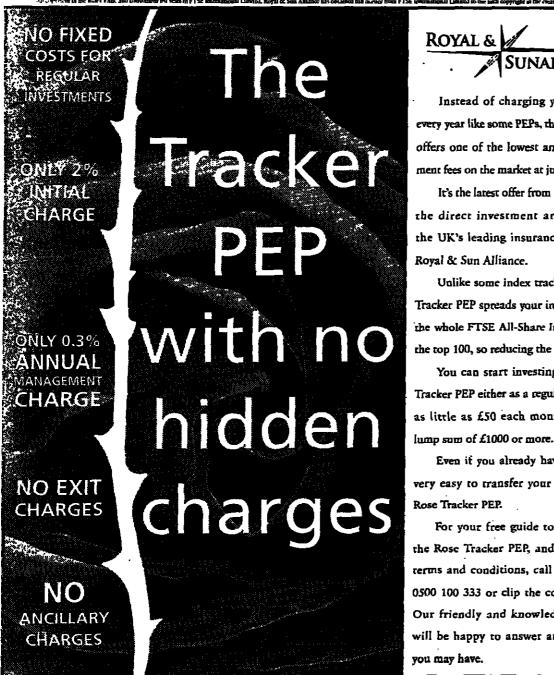
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How to tell the markets

too hot

THE INDEPENDENT SATURDAY

How to tell the markets are running too hot



JONATHAN DAVIS COLUMN

Christmas was to make a present of a Rubik's Cube. This year, a wise present for the canny stock market investor might well be a crash course in what market afficionades know as "Tobin's q". I am grateful to Andrew Smithers, chairman of the investment consultancy firm of Smithers & Co. for a fascinating insight into this improbably named tool for evaluating

the state of the world's stock markets.

If you don't know what Tobin's q ratio is, the chances are that you are not alone. But he warned - it is important; and it is not for the fainthearted. For the message that it is transmitting today is uncompromisingly one of warning about the risks in the markets at their current levels.

Tobin's q ratio is the invention of a distinguished American economist by the name of James Tobin, who won the Nobel Prize in 1981 for his pioneering work In a number of economic subjects, of which the stock market was just one. He was interested in the economic behaviour of the stock market and its relationship with the real economy.

One of his great insights was to see that you could use aggregate national income statistics to take the temperature, as it were, of the stock mar-

A few years ago, the big craze at ket at any point in time. By comparing the replacement cost value of the corporate sector's assets with the value of the stock market at the same moment, you can derive an overall sense of how far the market is devi-ating from its fundamental value. This relationship is the famous q

ratio. In effect, it is the reading on the stock market's thermometer. It tells us whether the market is running hot or cold at any time - and by how far. Not for nothing does the Federal Reserve in the United States use a very similar measure to try and judge whether the stock market is overheating or not.

It is, let us be clear, a theoretical construct developed by a man who de-scribed himself, openly and with pride, is "an ivory tower economist". It tells us nothing about what the market is going to do tomorrow. But what it does tell us is where the current level of the markets is in relationship to the long run historical average to which it must over time revert.

In the words of Andrew Smithers. who has done more than anyone to bring the concept to the attention of the City's fund management community, it is not strictly speaking a valuation tool at all, but a measure of the risk in the market at any time. The

higher the ratio stands, the greater the risk that the markets will soon fall back to their historical average levels and beyond.

What worries the aficionados of Tobin's q is that the ratio is now standing at levels in both the United States and the UK which are as high as they have ever been in the past. The chart shows how the ratio has moved over the years since the start of the great bull market of the 1920s. (The pre-war data is the result of some outstanding historical detective work by a British economist, Stephen Wright of Cambridge University). The message is about as clear as it could be: until this month's squalls in the markets, prompted by the unfolding financial crisis in the Asian region, both the UK and US markets were

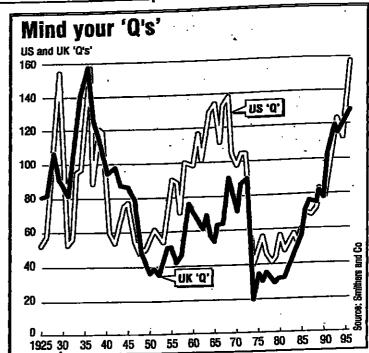
Andrew Smithers himself has no doubt what message investors should read into the chart's findings. Rather like Cassandra, he has been trying to sound the alarm for more than 18 months. In September 1996, he calculated that the UK market was "dangerously overpriced" at around 1.7 to 2.0 times its long-run historical average. The US market was even more overvalued on the same

standing at dangerously high levels.

Yet since then the markets have continued to be strong, demonstrating that the ratio is indeed a measure of risk, not of the market's short term direction. The q ratio now is higher still. Does the market's strength invalidate the theory that lies behind Tobin's q? No. It merely emphasises that shares are volatile and more risky than other types of asset, which is precisely why they provide higher returns over long periods of time.

But what you can say - and Mr Smithers does, to who all who will listen - is that the further you look ahead, the higher the probability that returns from equities will now be poor or negative. He has a telling table which chronicles how share prices have performed in the five years after the q ratio has peaked in the past. The simple answer is: they go down. The minimum the q ratio has fallen in the past after a peak has been 46.per cent. The average fall from peak to trough

has been 63 per cent. The implication is that the US and UK stock markets are both heading for a substantial fall at some point in the next five years. This will be a familiar message to readers of this column, but this time at least you don't have to take my word for it. "Professor adding, "I expect him to be justified cheerfully admits. But then Cassan-



Tobin received a Nobel prize for his in keeping them." The markets are dra never expected to be heard either.

work and the US market may thus be still making that bet, on both sides of said to be taking a \$3 trillion bet that the Atlantic, and making lots of he should return his laurels," Mr money as a result of defying Mr Smithers commented last year. Smithers' warnings, as he himself

UNDERSTANDING THE STOCK MARKET

companies able to increase their earnings per share at a greater rate than average. Shares in such companies can be one of the most rewarding of stock market investments, with shareholders share and share price are um-

vided by the number of shares issued. If a company manages to sustain an annual 15 per cent growth, it would double earnings over a five-year period.

Naturally, investors are interested in the future as opposed to the past. Optimistic views in the chairman's statement found in the most recent annual accounts point to history repeating itself. Another good sign is the company's policy towards dividends. A record of an increasing rate of dividend is good, but a fall in the rate of increase or simply maintaining the previous level can be a warning signal.

While a company's aboveaverage progress is an indication of good management, it also suggests it has a strong competitive advantage which makes it difficult for others to improve on or copy.

Companies with brand names that have long been household names are in a strong

Growth stocks are the shares of position to grow. Similarly companies which have patents on products in great demand can earn shareholders a fortune.

Companies' published accounts offer invaluable information. Increasing profits need securing significant capital gains to be reflected in growing cash in the long term as earnings per balances, not in higher stock levels or fixed assets.

Check that the net operat-Earnings per share is a ing cash flow is at least the same straightforward concept. It is as, but preferably more than, simply the after-tax profits di- the net operating profits. Truly great growth stocks also have little or no balance sheet debt. Seek companies whose debt is less than 50 per cent of net

The engine that drives a company's share price is earnings. One of the leading investment yardsticks is the price/earnings (p/e) ratio. It is the company's share price divided by its after-tax earnings per share. In other words is the number of years' earnings needed to equal the current

Investors will pay more for a share if they think a company's earnings are going to rise quickly. Essentially the ratio reveals how highly investors value a company's prospective earnings.

Generally, a high p/e denotes a growth company, while a low p/e ratio is a sign of inertia and risk. The p/e is shown daily on The Independent's Shares page. -John Andrew

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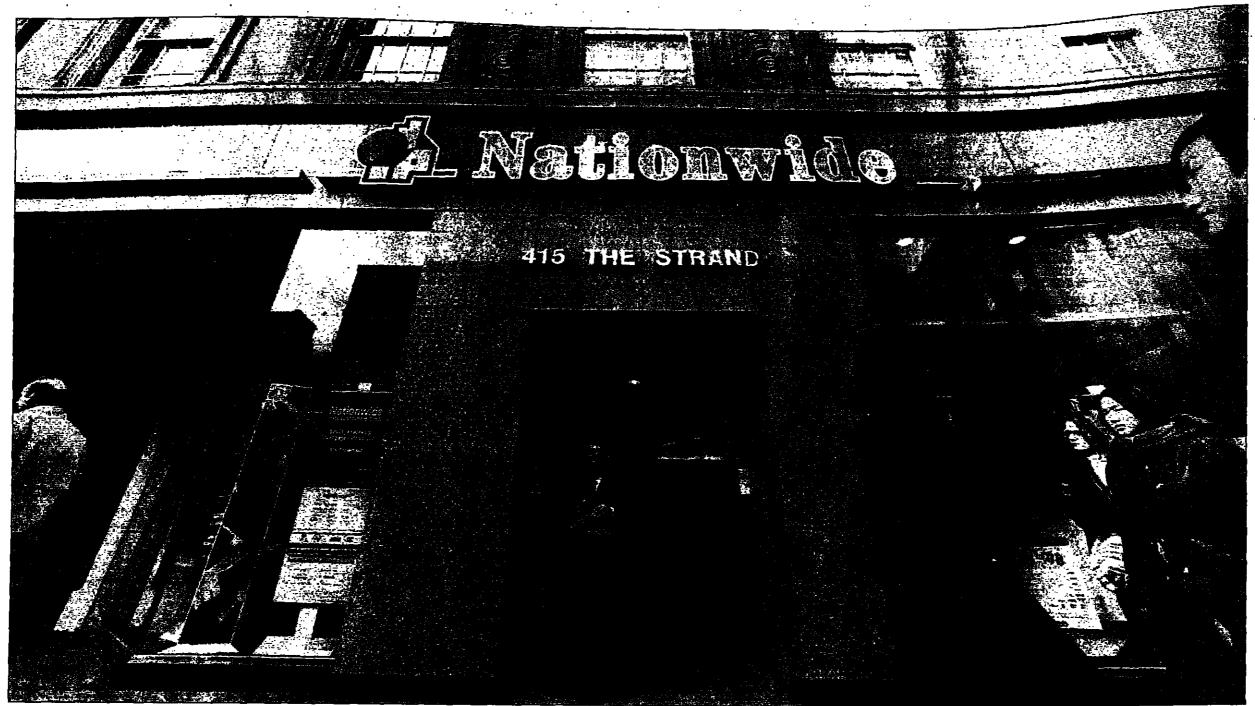
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The customer is king: Nationwide, along with the other building societies that have stayed mutual, has to retain the loyalty of its savers and borrowers and compete head-on with all comers in the financial world

The building societies, the mutual insurers, the Co-op ... mutual societies have a long and distinguished history. But what sort of future do they have now that some of the biggest have converted to plc status? Tony Lyons introduces a two-page survey showing why the surviving mutuals believe they still have a

Mutual societies have been an established part of the financial scene for over two centuries. Not listed on any stock exchange and owned entirely by members, they had

a cosy existence for most of the time. There are different types of mutual societies. These range from the Co-operative Society to building societies owned by their saving and borrowing members, plus life offices owned by with-profits pol-

Many mutuals were formed originally by local worthies to provide local benefits

surers. They had no outside shareholders to demand a return on capital invested.

The past couple of years have seen the existence of mutuals under challenge. As the banks in particular have sought to increase their product range, offering under one roof all the financial services that their customers want, new entrants have emerged in their more traditional markets in the shape of direct providers and supermarkets.

Who would have thought, barely a few years ago, that one might be able to buy and financial assistance to members, investments or pensions at Marks & They believed that by having a stock marwhether to provide housing in the case of Spencer, that Richard Branson's Virgin op- ket listing they could diversify while at the tions, including that of the insurer Norwich show. The evidence shows that they are building societies or life cover by the in- eration would become a significant force same time shareholder pressure would in- Union, together with a number of take- winning the debate.

in savings and mortgages, or that the some of best instant savings deals would come from Tesco and Sainsbury's.

In order to compete in what they see as a much bigger marketplace, some of the largest mutuals have changed to plc status, enriching their members in the ifax, Alliance & Leicester and Woolwich. any change in mutual status.

crease returns by enabling them to become more efficient.

All this has led to wild speculation as money flooded into potential demutalisers, especially building societies, in the hope of making windfall gains. This dramatically slowed down after many of the beleaguered process. Abbey National was the first in societies raised their minimum deposit rates the queue nearly a decade ago. The re- for becoming a member from £1 to £1,000 cession slowed the process, however. In the or more. The Government is also coming last couple of years Abbey has been to their aid by changing the rules so that joined by several large rivals including Hal- at least half the members have to vote on

overs, including Bristol & West, National & Provincial, and Scottish Amicable, have put more than £30bn into the pockets of their former members, equal to some £1,700 for every adult in the country. The increased competition from pro-

prietary companies with their outside shareholders has made the committed mutuals, and their near cousins the provident societies, sit up and take stock. Gone is the former complacency. Now they are striving not only to retain the loyalty of their existing members but also to compete head

The dust has settled but the war goes on

utual societies have en living in abnormal arket conditions over e past couple of years. ilding societies in rticular have seen aves of speculative flows from customers ping for conversions or keovers. But, as Vernon ikes writes, the mutuals e fighting back.

ie windfall fever has now clined. The recent decision Helen Liddell, Treasury Secary, that at least half the mbers of a society must te on any question of demudisation has put a damper on eculation.

While the spate of converns has diminished, the arment for and against ituality continues to rage , with each side highlighting respective benefits.

John Caine, director of corrate affairs at Alliance & icester, is particularly critiof his mutual competitors, iming that they have double indards and inherent :fficiencies.

He says: "The first mutual s formed in a Birmingham b in 1781 by teachers and ries, people with a common nd. How then can a society h an objective to aid memrs be extended to include a llion or more people from all iks of life? Just look at the anges and product available the customer now compared .h years ago."

He is particularly critical of tionwide, the biggest res summer's vote when a of members tried to join : board so as to force it to deitualise. John Caine claims programmes for their members.

members were not given a real choice in their future. "Something like 350,000 people voted for a freelance butler to be on the board at the Nationwide. If the vote had been the option to convert or not, I guarantee many more would have voted to convert."

As for whether the societies

offer the best deals, Mr Caine cites a recent survey in Your Mortgage magazine of 46 leading mortgage lenders, where Nationwide ranked 45th most expensive for the cost of a £30.001 mortgage between August 1992 and July, 1997. He states that this is proof that mutuals are not always offering the best deals. Indeed, Alliance & Leicester, which converted to a publicly owned early this year, was the cheapest lender over that period.

Such surveys are offered to counter the battle cry that a mutual always offers the best deal. Yet, as with many such surveys, they do not always tell the whole truth. The early to mid-1990s was a period in which many societies felt no need to compete seriously in defence of mutuality.

Hence, deals on offer remained broadly the same across both banks and building societies. Over the past two years that has changed and it is likely - assuming present conditions still apply in two or three years' time - that mutuals will then be trouncing their banking rivals.

Ken Culley, chief executive of Portman Building Society and chairman of the Metropolitan Association of Building Societies, argues: "As a mutual, we do not have to pay dividends or maximise profits for the ining building society, after sake of institutional share-

holders. This is unlike a plc." Portman and other building societies have launched loyalty Pay-backs are given in the forms of bonuses to longstanding borrowers and savers, depending on profits made.

Looking at life assurance, the leading mutuals such as Scottish Widows, Standard Life, Friends Provident and Equitable Life, have had a long record of being amongst the top performers for longterm-with profits endowment and pension policies. Not having to pay dividends to outside shareholders means that the members get the benefits.

The mutual financial service providers are using their capital structure and competitive strengths to try and convince customers that they provide the best deals in the marketplace, in terms of products, pricing and service standards.

These new strategies have had an especially dramatic impact in the highly competitive mortgage market. In 1996, building societies committed to their mutual status took a greater share of net mortgage lending than banks, converting mutuals and specialist providers combined.

A similar picture has emerged this year, with mutuals capturing a far bigger slice of business than they would seem to be entitled to. Of course, some of this is down to the expectations of many new members, particularly savers, that in the event of a future society flotation, they stand to gain from another free share bonanza.

None of this implies that the mutuals can afford to rest on their laurels. Some of the their largest competitors in mortgage, banking and insurance are looking to expand by means of mergers and acquisitions. Many new entrants, such as the supermarket giants, are coming on the scene. There is a continuing trend by the large institutions to offer an everwidening range of products under one roof.

These developments are increasing competitive pressure and it is far from clear what the final shape of the financial services industry will be in a few years time. As a consequence everyone is trying to beef up their quality of service they offer customers, engaging specialist marketing consultancies to assist them.

Peter Rufus, director at The Red Partnership, just such an agency, says: "There is continual pressure to earn more revcaue from existing customers. But revenue will only come from understanding the changing needs of customers.

"This means building relationships based on the way that customer wants to be served. The days when a prospective customer approached a bank or building society with cap in hand are a distant memory. The customer is now king."

Chris Holland, Bradford & Bingley's corporate affairs manager, admits that the mutuals occasionally get things wrong. But he adds: "Such instances are often outweighed by improving standards and a positive effort to learn from errors."

The importance of maximising customer satisfaction is recognised, especially when this can lead to new purchases. "A satisfied customer who buys additional services leads to better profits," says Mr Holland.

However, the future of the mutuals is in the hands of their savers and borrowers, who are demanding ever better service and products at prices that represent solid value. After all, without any obvious benefits, membership of a mutual society may feel no different to being a customer in a publicly-

Worth checking out in the age of supermarket savings

it used to be easy. If you wanted a mortgage or savings account you went to a building society, if you needed a bank account you went to a bank and if you wanted groceries you visited a supermarket. Nowadays, they all offer mortgages and savings accounts. The building societies argue they still provide the best deals, but is this true? Abigail Montrose investigates.

Following the recent spate of building society conversions, there are now just 71 left in business in the UK, with over 10 million members between them. The societies argue that they offer better value over the long-term than other savings and mortgage providers because they only have their members' interests at heart. In contrast, the mutuals claim, public companies, such as the banks and former building societies, put shareholders' interests before those of their

customers. Alan Oliver, spokesman for the largest building society, Nationwide, says: "We don't have to pay dividends or put shareholders' interests first. We can focus on our customers in everything we do, passing on the benefits of better mortgage and savings rates to them." Fine words,

but does the rhetoric stand up to the facts?

A recent survey by the Consumers' Association looked at the savings and mortgage rates offcred throughout 1996 by the five largest remaining building societies - Nationwide, Bradford & Bingley. Britannia, Birmingham Midshires and Yorkshire, These were compared with five which had announced their decision to convert into banks - Halifax, Woolwich, Alliance & Leicester, Northern Rock and Bristol & West.

Those which became banks charged mortgage borrowers an average variable interest rate of 6.75 per cent during 1996 - 0.3 percentage points more than the promutual building societies. A typical £50,000 loan would cost about £8-£9 a month more with a bank than a

building society, Savers with the converting societies also lost out, receiving an average of 4.41 per cent gross interest on their savings, compared to 4.8 per cent that the mutuals were paying. On a £5,000 deposit, the mutuals win out by £19.20 a year on average.

The converting societies may have been able to get away with poorer rates as they forced members to remain with them in order to receive their cash wind-

But figures from the Building Societies Association show that on average banks regularly charge more for mortgage loans than building

societies. In September, for example, the average standard variable rate mortgage from a bank was 8.45 per cent, while the average building society

charged a lower 8.13 per cent. Further evidence of this trend comes from Money-Facts, a provider of interest rate data. It looked at how much interest the top 30 mortgage lenders charged on a £50,000 standard variable rate mortgage in the 12 months to the end of June

The seven cheapest deals were all offered by building societies. Yorkshire Building Society, for example, charged £299.91 less that year than Bank of Ireland Mortgages charged for the same mortgage.

But the building societies also now compete with direct sellers such as Direct Line and Virgin Direct and new telephone banks such as Scottish Widows Bank and Sainsbury's Bank, which currently offer some of the lowest standard mortgages on the market.

To try and stop these new mortgage providers cutting in on their share of the market. a number of huilding socicties have introduced special deals. For example, Bradford & Bingley, in common with some smaller, regional societics, offers reduced standard variable mortgage rates to long-term borrowers.

Britannia Building Society has a members' loyalty bonus scheme, which pays out an annual bonus to members depending on its annu-

Nationwide has given back £400m in total to members in the form of better mortgage and savings rates. Its standard variable mortgage rate is presently 8.1 per cent and it has promised not to raise this before Christmas,

The savings market is just as competitive as that for mortgages. The new banks set up by supermarkets and insurance companies such as Prudential Banking, Legal & General Bank, Scottish Widows Bank, Sun Banking Corporation and Sainsbury's Bank offer some impressive rates, especially for instant access and postal accounts.

Nationwide argues, however, that often these new banks will only offer one or two types of savings account. whereas building societies typically offer a much wider range.

A quick look at the best buy tables shows building societies frequently offer the best deals on long-term savings accounts such as fixedrate accounts, regular savings

accounts, Tessas and bonds. In the future, it remains to be seen how many building societies will be able to maintain their mutual status. Members may yet be seduced by promises of large windfalls and seek to conven their societies into banks.

In the meantime, they are putting up a fight to retain their members, forcing other financial institutions to offer attractive rates to both savers and borrowers. Long may this last.

Cred

A fight for your life insurance

The debate about the benefits of mutuality has concentrated on the building societies, but the battle to defend the benefits of collective membership is being fought just as hard in the insurance industry, as Simon Read reports.

Why go to a mutual organisation to buy life assurance? "Mutuals often produce better payouts for their policyholders," argues David Mott of the Co-operative Insurance

Duncan MacKechnie, chief executive at Direct Line Life, disagrees. The life insurance marketplace is ripe for change and the position of strength enjoyed by the mutuals for a long time is now being successfully challenged by newcomers such as Direct Line," he says.

It's obvious on which side of the fence these two sit. Mutual life offices extol the virtues of traditional mutuality while direct insurers and banks point to speed of service or ease of buying a policy. "We are proving that life insurance need not be a complicated, time-consuming purchase involving huge commissions paid to intermediaries," says Mr MacKechnic.

The Direct Line concept is straightforward, selling simple life assurance at and more customers are coming to us because of the simplicity and ease of buying over the phone in minutes, at times that suit their lifestyle," says Mr MacKechnie. The efficiency of our operations, plus the lack of commissions, means that our customers can often save as much as 50 per cent on their premiums."

So cust-savings and convenience are promised. How can the mutuals match up? "Our charges are low and the whole of our life surplus goes to life policyholders in the form of bonuses," says Mr Mott. "But also part of the co-operative philosophy is providing the best service we can. Our sales force is one of the best trained in the industry. We can visit and advise customers

in the comfort of their own homes." An example of where mutuality is still a key part of the business is the friendly societies, which offer a range of savings and life assurance-linked products.

They receive generous tax advantages and their very mutuality means the societies can deliver better value for money, according to Nigel Brinn, chief executive of Homeowners Friendly Society. "Because we do not have to provide a return to shareholders, we only need to look after our members," he says. "This, of course, only works if we do not over-price our products." While some friendly societies are renowned for the heavy charges they levy on their competitive rates over the phone. "More products, they argue this is the price paid



for not insisting on very high contribution levels into their policies.

Mutuality is at risk from the so-called carpetbaggers, who have swept through building societies and insurance companies in search of easy profits by forcing the organisations to become public companies. The resultant share handout has given billions of pounds in free shares to members of the former mutual companies.

Could the same thing happen to friendly societies? Mr Brinn thinks not. "We're not prone to carpetbaggers in the same way that building societies are," he says. "Partly because friendly societies have not, in general, built up large reserves and partly

because our tax advantages would go upon losing the status of a friendly society."

Despite the mutuals' claims, Richard Rogers, an independent financial adviser with Roy King Insurance and Financial Services in Cornwall, thinks that when it comes to considering life assurance, mutuality is not the key issue.

"Despite the army of home service salesmen from the Pru, Pearl, Liverpool Victoria and so on, and more recently the advent of the bancassurers, the public remains woefully under-insured," he says. *Premium rates for pure life assurance have come down considerably in recent years and anyone with such policies should be shop-

ping around for cheaper cover in just the same way as they would for their car in-

Effectively, when it comes to buying simple term assurance, which only pays a benefit in case of death, you should simply choose on price irrespective of the status of the life assurer.

When it comes to investment-based policies, however, it is essential to look closely at the investment element. "Withprofits plans have been the traditional way to combine savings with life assurance," says Mr Rogers, "Mutual companies have consistently figured among the top performers as they are able to return all their profits generally given by the mutuals.

A case for treatment: The private health providers have found it hard to sign up new customers despite the lengthy NHS queues

to their policyholders. Proprietary com-panies need to make dividend payments to their shareholders.

"At present however, we are seeing some mutual life assurance offices losing their status as they are taken over by banks or other insurers, or turn themselves into proprietary companies. There are probably too many companies competing and further mergers seem inevitable, in much the same way as the number of building societies has contracted over recent years."

Choosing between mutuals and nonmutuals, therefore, comes down to the type of product you're seeking. If you are not looking for an investment, just life cover, then the cheapest policies can often come from a non-munual.

But for a significant cash payout at the end of a fixed period, you'll need to consider a much more expensive with-profits endowment policy or equity-linked life assurance. Here charges vary greatly among the companies and they will have a big impact on the eventual maturity value of investment products, so they need to be looked at closely.

An independent financial adviser will have to know what the charges are and what past investment returns have been with most companies, and will be able to guide you to the right policy. But as a general rule of thumb, the best returns at maturity are

The multi-billion pound medical insurance sector is under the weather

If mutual societies appear to have fallen victim to the conversion fad in the banking and life insurance sectors, their cousins the

provident associations continue to dominate the multi-billion pound private medical insurance (PMI) market. Richard Shackleton reports on this relatively unknown sector.

Despite a mixed outlook for the industry, provident associations have been the backbone of PMI provision in the UK. Three of the four largest companies are providents.

Non-profit making and governed by charter, providents have been around for a long time. Most were formed in the early years of this century, before the formation of the National Health Service, to provide health care for their members. Fees for doctors and hospital treatment came out of the memhers' subscriptions. WPA, for example, can trace its origins back to the 1901 Reading District Works People's Hospital Fund.

Because of their history, the providents have boards of governors appointed by technical members, including experts from the medical profession, unlike the mutuals, which are owned by their depositors or policyholders. This unique structure insulates them from shareholder pressure. They can take a long-term view at a time when the once booming market for PMI has been experiencing a protracted slowdown.

Despite lengthening queues for NHS

treatment, our readiness to sign up with private health providers remains at remarkably low levels. Since 1990, the number of people covered by PMI has been stuck at around 11 per cent of the population. For the last 17 years, the annual growth rate in those choosing to insure their healthcare outside the NHS has barely averaged 3 per cent per annum - almost insignificant in underwriting terms. Even swecteners from the last Conservative government in the shape of tax breaks for the elderly did little to improve its

With the removal of tax allowances for PMI for the over-60s by the new Government, up to 100,000 people are estimated to have cancelled their policies, leaving insurers casting around for new buyers.

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"Much of the current PMI marketing strategy is centred on poaching each others' clients," says William Laing of independent healthcare analysts Laing & Buisson. The result has been serious oversupply of private medical provision. Too many private hospitals, most with occupancies below 50 per cent, are chasing too few patients.

In addition, escalating costs associated with improved surgical techniques and superior drugs have driven the total value of claims ever higher, forcing private medical insurers into sharply rising premiums. These increases have not only been way above the rate of inflation, but above the increase in NHS spending, and significantly above even the rise in average earnings, according to last year's report from the Office of Fair Trading.

faster than average earnings over a long period plainly faces problems," John Bridgeman, the OFT's director-general then recorded. "It will become less and less affordable."

The inevitable result has been to further deter potential customers. Yet perversely, the supply of PMI continues to expand. New entrants, including general insurers and banks, have made the market more competitive. William Laing says most of the new arrivals see PMI as either a way of filling a gap in their current product portfolio or have deep-enough pockets to see them through to predicted better times ahead.

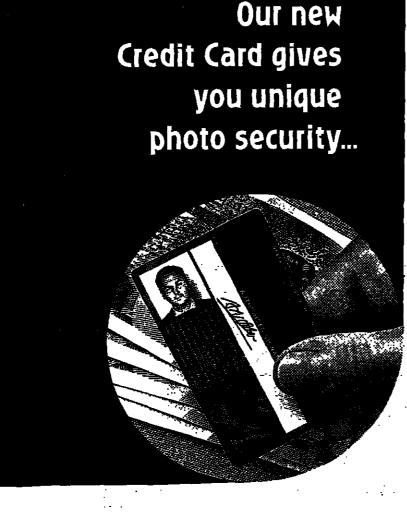
In reply, the providents have pioneered strategies aimed at restraining costs and

"Any product whose price goes up rationalising the number of players in the

The two largest insurers, Bupa and PPP Healthcare, have reduced consumer choice by adopting "preferred providers" that limsubscribers to a network of about 150-170 hospitals. The result should be higher volumes in fewer hospitals and, as a result. lower prices and premiums.

Longer term, the number of PMI insurers will reduce. PPP Healthcare is expected to be acquired by GE Capital as part of the US giant's assault on the UK market. The recently floated Halifax is also known to be on the lookout to make acquisitions in the sector. But in the meantime, the growth in the number of companies in this sector acts as a weak brake on rising prices.

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Rural life beckons? Opt for renting

Who could blame anyone for thinking that the path to a house in the country is littered with failed offers, poor choice and a long wait? More than a few who sold up in London earlier in the year will find their goal of being settled by Christmas diminishing fast. But as Penny Jackson discovers, there are also those for whom a move out of town has been a brilliant decision.

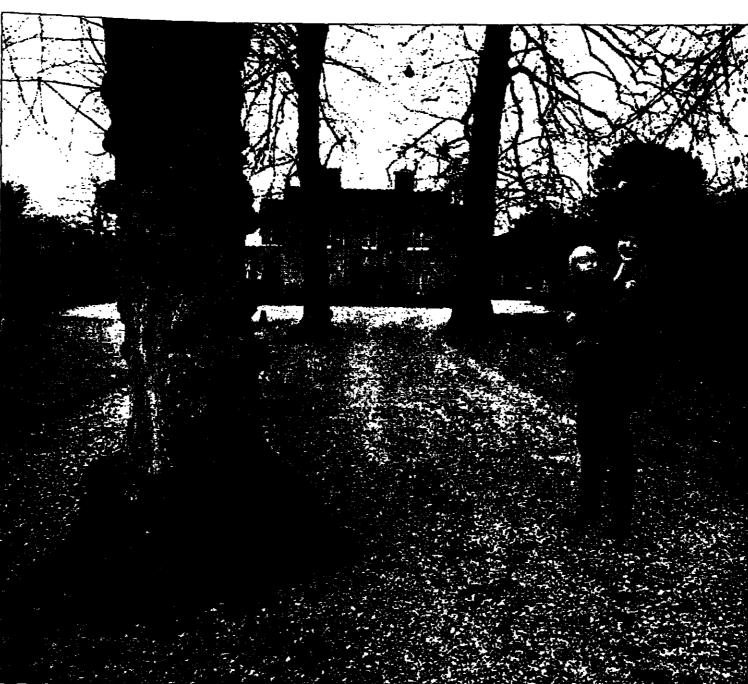
Tales of woe from those who have been house-hunting for years can sound like a catalogue of frustration. It would all be much easier if buyers did not have their hearts set on the same kinds of property. But there are only so many Georgian rectories in nice villages, and the chances are their owners are staying put - if only because they themselves find the alternatives in depressingly short supply. Nevertheless, there are those who manage to move out of town without being reduced to panic.

One couple who abandoned south London for Gloucestershire in the summer had seen enough friends tearing down the motorway to view yet another unsuitable house, to know what course to take.

They are letting their Balham house while renting in the country. "For at least a year and a half we are going to relax and enjoy living bere," says Hugo Jackson, an investment broker. "We couldn't face the prospect of house-hunting from London. And this way we can find out which villages we like best. We are able to rent this house for three years, and if we still haven't found the house we want, we will rent again."

Even though Hugo and his they do have the comfort of knowing that if it doesn't work out - and commuting does take its toll - they still have their London home. One rent pays for the other and they have no worries about having realised their capital in a rising market.

Not that they are unaware of the difficulties of finding their ideal house. They are not alone in wanting somewhere within 20 minutes of school



At home: Serena Jackson is enjoying the space of their new home, which they are renting while they search for the ideal house John Lawrence

and station or of wanting a to enjoy being tenants. "Up-Cotswold stone farmhouse.

"We already know of 12 or 14 sets of parents in the school looking for exactly the same thing," says Hugo. However, Serena, who is still enjoying the novelty of so much space for their three sons, has confidence in the power of

"So many houses never even come on to the market", she says. "Once we took the plunge it wasn't as difficult to move as we feared. It feels like home because we have our furniture and we are not under pressure to buy. I can see how demoralising that would be."

not only brought landlords some unexpectedly good returns, they have even learned

wards of £2,000 a month buys quality of life without repair liabilities," says Andrew Brown, of Clegg Kennedy Drew, a firm of estate agents. "We have one family who, rather than sell their family home, are letting it out and renting a larger one while

Other tenants hope, quite often against the odds, that the house they are renting will eventually come up for sale. "Requests for first refusal are quite common", he says. As prices in London

reached a peak in the spring, so the temptation to sell and During the past couple of move out proved irresistible years, reluctant renters have to many who already had vague plans in mind. "They arrived in Hampshire, guns blazing," recalls Tim Garne,

of Hamptons International. "Even those with cash found it harder than they imagined. It seemed worth it to them to pay well over the odds to secure a house."

Most people, even though in the £350,000 to £450,000 bracket, have to compromise. "Some might go for the right while others will move into a modern hox and wait for more houses to come on to the market. Plenty have been renting for two years longer than they had planned, but often they are stuck because of schools," says Mr Garne.

if they wait too long." Christine Martin and ber husband decided within a couple of days to sell and go.

"There is a danger that their

capital will be whittled away

"When we found that our Ealing house had risen in value in a matter of months we thought we would be foolish to wait. We were out within eight weeks and renting. The fact that we did it on the spur of the moment was exciting

rather than nerve-wracking." tonshire ~ right school, good rail links and reasonable value for money. Even so, they did not get the 200-year-old house of their dreams, "We would still be waiting now, like many couples we know. As it is, we have a good size bouse with great potential. So many of the houses we saw were over-developed."

Clearly the longer buyers wait, the harder it is to compromise. In Circnester, Ru-

pert Barrington of John D. Wood has some clients who have been waiting for five years for property with land. Houses for sale with 10 or 15 acres are few and far between.

When they do come up, it is not uncommon to find someone has paid hand-The Martins narrowed somely to take it out of the mium may well not be enough. Frustrated purchasers have taken the place of disgruntled vendors these days. Those who have taken to dropping on their estate agent at least weekly expect some rewards. But clients not favoured by the phone call can feel aggrieved. "We now refuse to tip anyone off and mail details to everyone at the same time. It seems fairer all

round", says Mr Barrington.

JACKSON

Swap shop - one agent's remedy for the log-jam

"If I'd earned a pound for every time someone told me they would sell if only they could find somewhere to buy, I wouldn't need to sell houses at all", one estate agent complained the other day. He is not alone.

In Beaconsfield, Timothy Gerrard, of estate agents Raffety Buckland, is so fed up with the log-jam he has taken matters into his own hands. He is in the process of publishing a mini-magazine with properties people are thinking of selling. T can already see two owners doing a perfect swap. They don't know it yet but they are just around the corner from each other. Both can afford the other house and they have

The enterprising Mr Gerrard decided to get the ball rolling when he found 115 people on the computer in the area who wanted to buy but were auxious about putting their own houses up for sale even though valuations had been done. "Many want to stay in the same road, but are after a house with perhaps a larger garden or one more bedroom, while others want to trade down. Local people often can't compete with the unencumbered buyers from London so this might give them a head-start."

Good news for commuters from Banbury. Chiltern Railways is to cut the journey time between that station and Marylebone by 25 mins. The new, fast, peak-time only service, which will start in May, means that Birmingham to London will take just under two hours instead of 2hr 25 mins, while the journey from Banbury is reduced to an hour from the present 1 hr 25 mins.

According to George Philip in the Banbury office of Lane Fox, the estate agents, this should make a significant difference to the value of property in north Oxfordshire. "Something in the region of 7 to 10 per cent", he says. "This area has been held back by its relatively slow service. It will now be on a par with places like Winchester and Newbury". Chiltern Railways also has plans for a new out-of-town sta-

Nicholas Brown of Knight Frank in Oxford can also envisage it becoming more viable as a commuter area, as much to those working in Birmingham as in London. "At present, the most popular areas for London commuters are southwest of Oxford, which has good rail links, and east of Oxford, which is the right side for the motorway. They also want to be able to get into the city easily for the schools, so there is enormous demand in the villages within 10 or

Wanted; one careful tenant who loves dogs. The owners of a north London house who are moving overseas next month are so upset at the thought of their pet being separated from its home as well as the family, they are hoping to leave it in situ. The future of Freeway - a Shih Tzu - is hanging in e. "It would be loveb says Susan Gilbert of Knight Frank, who is letting the house between Barnet and Hadley Wood.

"But of course, the owner is prepared to make other arrangements. This is an unusual request, although we did have somebody who left a cat with a year's supply of food." The whole business of pets can be fraught, Ms Gilbert says. A great many landlords refuse to have them in their properties. "This can cause an awful lot of upset. Sometimes a family reluctantly uproots and the one way of making the children feel more at home is by having a pet. It is a terrible dilemma if they find the right house and then discover they can't bring their dog to live there,"

Hampstead Lettings, Knight Frank: 0171 431 8686.

Hard lessons to learn about moving house

that tiny feet will never patter down their hallways need read no further. Those of you already encumbered, or undecided, should read on. You may have considered every aspect

House hunters certain

of your future home but do you know where the nearest school is? Gnetta Vedrickas offers some

Romana Roeg searched for "the perfect house" for nine months. It had to have a side entrance for her landscape gardening business but, more important, had to be near the school of choice for her daugh-

She found her dream home, in the right borough and only a couple of streets away from the Telegraph Hill school, in south London, but was shocked when Ava didn't get in. She says: "Even though we're close. we're nearer to another school. Ironically, if we'd bought somewhere down the road, and further away, we would have got in because there's no other

school nearby." Ms Rocg found that siblings get first choice and children new

at their nearest school, as long as their parents apply. Borough lines are irrelevant. She appealed: "It was horrendous. I felt the headteacher was sitting there grinning like a Cheshire cat knowing we wouldn't get in." Her house no longer felt perfect. Eventually Ms Roeg found a school she liked further away which, happily, had a place for Ava. Her advice to other parents? "Do your research properly." Stephen and Joy Darwen

did their research. They found ал idyllic retreat in Coulsdon, in Surrey, with a nearby school for daughters Sara and Ruth. They put their Crystal Palace town house on the market, got a buyer and told the local school that their children were

When the buyer dropped out the Darwens became neryous. After the second buyer dropped out they panicked. "At the worst point, I registered with 12 estate agents, advertised in every publication going, had a saleboard made and gave A4 colour posters to 30 local shops. A lot of shopkeepers wouldn't put up the posters until they'd looked themselves. They thought I was so desperate it had to be a bargain but even then they didn't want it," says

Mr Darwen. After five buyers dropped

to the area are offered a place out, Mr Darwen found himself driving halfway across the country in search of the origin of one of the many long chains in which he was involved, but even that didn't help. The Darwens became exhausted by the daily 24-mile trip to the new school. "The children thought it was bizarre. We'd drive past their old school, they'd see their friends and demand Why can't we go there?' I just gritted my teeth, I thought it would go on forever," says Joy Darwen. The family finally moved eight months later.

Schools do not generally take children before their housing situation is resolved despite parents' pleas. Peter Coleman, head of Goodrich School, in East Dulwich, London, received over 200 applications for 90 places this year and has seen it all: "Parents show letters from estate agents [or] solicitors. One even slapped his cheque book down and said

'how much?" Not even a "donation to school funds" guarantees a place: "We won't consider you until exchange of contracts." Mr Coleman links desperation to the family's particular circumstances: "It's acute when people move into the area with three school-age children and have to find a house and three places simultaneously."

Diana Hamilton at Roy



Romana Roeg found a house near the school she wanted for her daughter, Ava, but was appalled to find she couldn't get in

Brooks, a firm of estate agents with offices in south London, describes buyers who are also looking for schools: "They come in and you can see anxiety on their faces. We've all been there, they're desperate. If you've got a property very near to a good school they'll pay more and be prepared to suffer one room less or a small garden just to get in." In fact, another agent admits that, in its view, it may be cheaper to pay for private schooling rather

than buy an overpriced house for its position.

Parents should be wary of taking estate agents' advice on catchment areas as local authorities use different criteria. Mr Coleman explains: "It's convoluted. Priority areas were abandoned in favour of distance to the school, as people assumed they would get places and didn't.

"We can't offer places to people who live nearer another school." He blames estate agents for misleading parents: "They

advertise houses as being in our 'catchment area' but there's no such thing. Parents buy on the strength of estate agents' blurb and it's just not true." So why say it? "Because it shifts houses,"

says Mr Coleman. John Thorogood, a Battersea estate agency, recently got a ticking off from a local school for advertising properties as being in its "catchment area". The marketing ploy was effective as an alternative to "betwixt the commons", but the can withdraw the place." Mr 1050.

school said it could never guar- Coleman meticulously meaantee places even for houses in the same mad.

Parents denied places at schools often sacrifice their homes for education. Mr Coleman tells of parents he's turned down who immediately put their house on the market and others who are prepared to rent just to get in.

Fraudsters should beware; "We catch people who don't live

sures the more contentious areas around the school but parents still challenge his measurements for - largely unsuccessful - appeals. As I left Goodrich School an anxiouslooking man panted past. I couldn't be certain, but I think he was wearing a pedometer.

John Thorogood: 0171 228 7474; Roy Brooks: 0181 299 3021; where they say they do and we Goodrich School: 0181 693

Divide and drool

Screen play isn't what it used to be. Once used in old houses to stop draughts whistling through the sitting room, or (in pre-bathroom days) to provide modesty in the bedroom while soaking in a tin bath, screens have been rediscovered. Rosalind Russell takes us through the options.

Developers working with warehouse and factory conversions are finding them the most practical way of dividing up what would otherwise be a very unbornely large space. Lighter than a solid wall, a fixed opaque glass screen maximises light. And where ceiling heights are high, a screen which stops short of the top has the effect of lowering it to a more friendly domestic level.

Even in smaller rooms, a screen works to separate work from play and conveniently disguises the detritus of an office at home, or hides the clutter of the kitchen.

Estate agents Winkworth are which will have views to St Paul's and preparing to launch a new development in the spring, in Hatton Garden, London's old jewellery quarter, where the developers have decided space into traditional boxes. Eight two- and three-bedroom flats and two penthouses will feature glass screens used to divide some rooms.

"As the flats will be very contemporary, with wooden floors and lots of glass and chrome, the smoked and has been designing and making etched glass partitions will be entirely in fitting with the finish," says Charles artists who are commissioned via the Peerless, of Winkworth. "They will be 2.6 metres high, the full height of the room, and look extremely smart. They are a clever way of diving the stained - glass. space while keeping the light."



the City, £650,000 apiece. In Fulham, a two-storey, warehouse-style conversion has been designed to allow in as much natural light against chopping up the available as possible by the use of a curved glass screen between kitchen and the 36ft sitting room. Functional and stylish, the two-bedroom house is being sold

through Chestertons for £420,000. Glass artist Diane Radford, who trained at the Royal College of Art, screens for 17 years. One of 10 glass de Putron art consultancy, she specialises in acid etched and sandblasted treatments and coloured - not

Her work includes a striking

Magic on screen; Diane Radford's etched horse (left), and Art Room's photographic option (right) are among a new breed of fashionable ways to divide your space while optimising light

mountains, which now stands in the entrance of an office block.

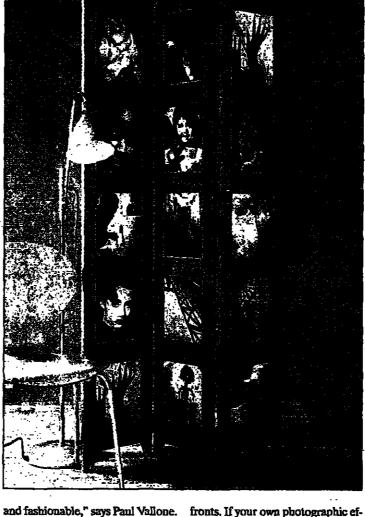
"Interiors designers seemed to be the first to be willing to put a toe into the water as far as the domestic market goes, says Diane, who designed pieces for the American Embassy in

"I have done a lot of work for their private homes, and for their clients who wanted something a bit different and had the budget to cope with

As prices range from £500 to £2,000 per square metre, depending on the techniques and materials used, the buyer would have to be sure of remaining in the same house for long enough to enjoy the outlay. But, says Diane, screens can be the most practical way of overcoming other problems. Back lit, it can distract the eye from an unsightly view.

"I have made one for someone who wanted to hide a brick wall a couple of feet from his window. But a glass screen can also be used to soundproof a room, as well as keep light flowing through. It is made with a space between the two panels, rather wider than double glazing."

The trend for dividing screens is filtering down to the more mass market developers, too. Berkeley Homes have found glass panels between kitchen and sitting room in The flats will sell for around etched horse, the contours drawn to their Jacob's Wharf development £250,000 each; the penthouses - look like the map markings for popular with buyers. "It's practical



had a view of the Thames."

the lacquered floor screen frame white bevel-cut mounts for smaller sold through the Art Room mail or- prints. It costs £195. der brochure. The three-panel, 69" 8" x 10" photographs behind glass 1125; Art Room 01993 770444.

"It also meant the person cooking still forts don't merit public display, the had a view of the Thames." A more portable screen option is black and white images, plus a set of

high folding screen is cut to hold 15 de Putron Art Consultants 0171 431

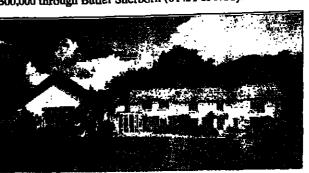
THREE TO VIEW AT £300,000



Dadlands is a refurbished period farmhouse in six acres at the end of a "no through road" in north Devon. The five-bedroom house has flagstone floors, open fireplaces with woodburning stoves, beamed ceilings and a French-style 16ft kitchen with Aga and Canton handmade floor tiles. Ten miles from Barnstaple, the farmhouse has a range of outbuildings which have planning consent for holiday cottages. £300,000 through GA Town & Country (01392 427070).



Monks Barn, in an unspoilt village just outside Stow-on-the-Wold in Gloucestershire, is a Grade II listed former salt house dating from 1510. It was used by monks travelling to and from the monasteries but was converted into a house in 1860. Now with four bedrooms, the Cotswold stone house has a large reception hall, drawing room and dining room and overlooks open farmland. Guide price £300,000 through Butler Sherborn (01451 830731).



Rockhead, a white-painted stone house in a part-wooded valley 14 miles from the north Devon coast, stands in 57 acres of pasture and woodlands. The four-bedroom house has a summer house and kitchen garden, with apple trees, fruit cage with raspberries, gooseberry, plum and rhubarb, and a stable range and stone barn. A mini estate, the property includes fishing rights on the River Bray, £300,000 through Knight Frank (01392 423111).

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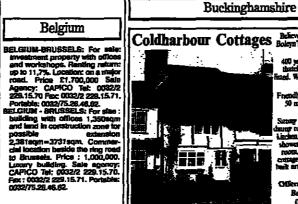
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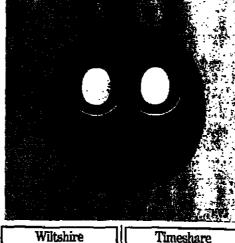
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A slow pace wins hands-down in the house-moving race

Boxes, bubble wrap, straps, packing material, paracetamol. Prozac - it's moving day. Plenty of people move home happily. cheaply and successfully with a man and a van, and even with only a van. Others move traumatically with high-priced professionals. Even if you have your act together, others will be clueless. Robert Liebman helps you across the

Removal-industry insiders have warehouses full of horror stories. Linda Schofield, marketing manager of Pickfords. says that "many people move into a property which they have seen only once. When they arrive they find that there is no room for the cooker, or it fits, but it is a gas cooker, and there is no gas supply."

There is always stress and always surprises," says Sarah Kampe, the moving force behind Moving Solutions. "For example, our eyes tend to gloss over our kitchen appliances, and it doesn't happen often, but occasionally someone will forget to take their refrigerator or cooker."

Some people move into converted properties which have large rooms and also, they soon discover, unusually narrow corridors. "The rooms themselves are spacious but there is a dogleg turn in the hallway. If you have not arranged for a crane, you end up with a piano or wardrobe with nowhere to go," says Ms Kampe.

Civil war is a common barrier to smooth moves. "Even though a couple is splitting up, you would think that they would at least communicate about the move and who gets what," says Ms Schofield at Pickford. "But many quarrelling couples use moving day as a sorting day, so it takes twice as long."

Ms Kampe agrees that multiple locations are a recipe for disaster. "When some items are staying and some are going, or furniture is moving to two addresses or some is going into storage, something is certain to end up in the wrong place."

When Ms Kampe handles a move, she verifies the correct completion time. Often the incoming family arrive at noon but the keys aren't available until two or three o'clock. "Tve heard of people waiting in the long for seven hours."

While waiting, there is generally little to do except cultivate an ulcer farm. And they are the lucky ones.

Good planning is vital, and 90 per cent of good planning means planning well in advance. Almost everyone grossly underpack, and some people take this foible to extremes. William Karslake, of the south London removers Ward-Thomas, remembers one seller who "waited until literally the 11th hour to hire a self-move van and start packing and loading. They were still

Removal companies need notice to reserve the appropriate lorry. Aside from owning twice as much as you think you do, numerous factors need investigating, in-

Many standard household contents many trips will be required? Without an- as part of a full-service move.

policies cover removals. But Keith Mc- swers to these questions, you can't compare Gregor, assistant household underwriting like with like." r for Royal & Sun Alliance warns "Most insurers will insist that brittle and breakable items, like china and other glass items, be packed and moved by professionals. And we anticipate that these items are going into the new premises. Furnishings going into storage are excluded."

Selecting a removal company can be tricky. Ms Kampe notes that it is not enough to obtain several quotes. "You need to find out what is included. Quotes can vary by £1,000 or more. But how many men are in-

numbers. "In the busy season the less reputable companies are less discriminating in who they hire," notes Ms Kampe.

Professional removals people know things we don't know, like how to correctly pack delicate items. They have things we don't have, like tail-lift trucks and trolleys. Large companies such as Pickfords of-

fer a self-move service that includes van hire and packing materials delivered in advance. Pickfords can also arrange for a plumber, cluded? How large is the lorry? How electrician, carpenter or other craftsman

redirecting the post, "I have a huge checklist and cover things people might overlook, like whether a catflap has to be cut in the new door. We can attend to council tax, pho-

washing machine," says Ms Kampe. If entirely stress-free moves are rare, traumatic relocations are also unusual. With removal companies, size matters, but so does temperament. Mr Karslake classifies

And organisations such as Moving So- cushion many a hard landing. In the move lutions can arrange for just about every- involving the half-day wait to midnight, "we jobs and we were able to re-direct them to

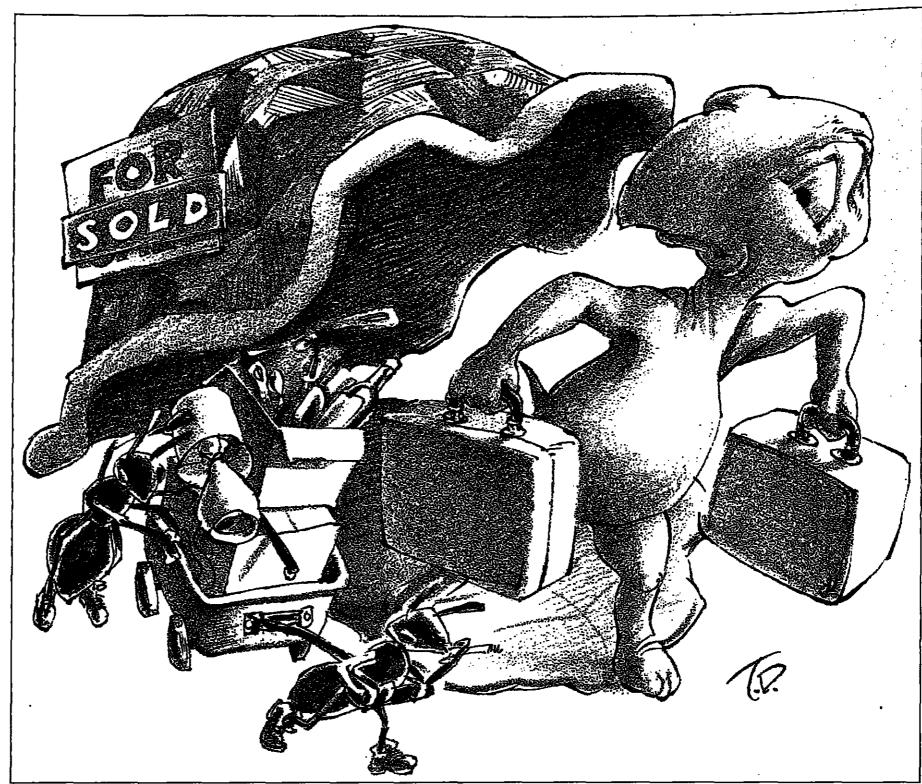
help us when we finally started unloading." Worse luck befell a family who arrived at their new home only to discover that the tography, telephone, cleaning old and new old owner refused to complete. The sale premises, and arranging plumbing for the was off. "Except that they had vacated their home and all of their belongings were in the truck in front," says Mr Karslake.

Quick action on all fronts salvaged the wreck. Their estate agent immediately found an empty house for them to rent. We removal companies as "sympathetic or delivered some furniture to the rental house surly". A large sympathetic company can and put the rest into storage."

Pickfords' Ms Schofield cautions that "moving is not just being transported from to get you settled in." Preferably in one piece emotionally as well as physically.

Moving Solutions, 56 Denton Street, London

SW18 2JS. 0181 355 4477; Pickfords, Heritage House, 345 Southbury Road, Enfield EN1 1UP. 0181 219 8000; Ward Thomas Removals, 13 Abbey Business Centre, Ingate Place, London SW8 3NS, 0171 498 0144; 13a Heath Street, London NW3 6TP; 0171 794 0600; Association of British Insurers, 51 Gresham Street, London EC2V 7HQ, 0171



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Each bank and building society has its own internal complaints procedure for dealing with borrowers who have a grievance. Once this procedure is completed, and if the borrover remains unsatisfied by any compensation they have been offered, the case can be taken either to the Bank or Building Society ombudsman. Those dealing with an intermediary, such as a mortgage broker, can take their complaint to the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators.

Last year, the Banking Ombudsman received 775 mortgage-related complaints, of which 109 were fully investigated with half of these resulting in awards to the borrower in excess of those first proposed by the banks in question, Meanwhile, the Building Society Ombudsman received 5.803 mortgage complaints for the year 1995-96. Of these, 173 concerned discrepancies on more age payments, and a fur-ther 18 covered cases that inl computer error.

the real figures may be known since the ac-

tual level of complaints made is higher. Complaints made direct to a lender which then offers compensation accepted by a borrower need not be reported to the relevant Ombudsman. But in adjudicating a case, the Ombudsman can look beyond legal requirements to what is fair or reasonable when considering a particular case.

Chris Eadie, deputy Bank Ombudsman, says: "The onus is on the lender to make the terms of a mortgage as clear as possible. Annual statements should include the term of your mortgage, as well as any charges and changes to interest rates during the year."

Mr Eadie adds: "While a building society might have handled things one way, after they convert to bank status a different corporate culture may prevail."

In particular, he is concerned about the rising number of cases which result from a mortgage term being lengthened after the account has gone into temporary arrears, where borrowers are not first asked if they would like to pay more instead.

. Mr Eadie advises borrowers to look carefully at their annual mortgage statement: "This is the consumer's first line of defence." But some lenders do not include enough information on these statements to enable borrowers to check whether their payments

All large mortgage lenders in the UK, whether banks or building societies, are members

of the Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML). Since earlier this year, the CML has operated a Mortgage Code which includes a commitment by members to "help you to understand how your mortgage account works" and "correct errors and handle complaints speedily."

Elsewhere, the code specifies: "If there have been any significant changes (to your mortgage) in one year, we will give you or send you a copy of the new terms and conditions or a summary of changes."

The Mortgage Code has only been in existence since July of this year, and is due for review at its first anniversary. At present, membership of the CML is in effect two tier, with full membership open to mortgage lenders, and associate membership open to other firms with significant involvement in this market. However, full membership will be open to mortgage intermediaries. such as brokers and financial advisers, from next spring.

Statements by some large lenders, including Abbey National, Barclays and Midland Bank, do not include the interest rates charged. Instead, lenders need only give notice of rate changes by advertising them in newspapers and branches, or posting out notice of changes when they occur. Some lenders, again including Abbey National, do not make it clear on the annual statement whether a mortgage is on a repayment or interest-only basis. Most do not give the out-

standing mortgage term.

admits: "The code does not specify what information should be included in an annual statement, because we don't want to be too prescriptive." But she adds: "There is no compulsion on members to enforce the code in a uniform way. After all, [we are] a trade association".

Ms Anderson is unwilling to comment on whether the CML will ask members to introduce a uniform standard of disclosure on annual mortgage statements. Meanwhile. it is better to check than be overcharged.

Sorting out all the information you require to check whether your statement is correct may necessitate contacting your lender by phone or Typical information you

need to know includes: . The balance of your loan

outstanding at the start and end of the period covered by vour annual statement. Any changes in interest rates over the period and when they were applied to your loan. Any changes in the balance

of the loan within the period. The amount of any charges (home insurance, for example) other than interest or capital on the loan made through monthly payments.

 The amount of any administrative charges which may be debited to your account as separate items. Anyone with arrears on

their account should also confirm whether or not the remaining term of their Sue Anderson, at the CML, mortgage has been extended.



'My loan jumped from 25 years to 35 without my consent'

Simon Williams has a mortgage with Abbey National. This is

his story.
"In 1991, I took out a 25-year repayment mortgage with the Abbey National for £33,375. In August this year, I went to a local branch to check out my account details. Purely by chance I was allowed to look at my account details on the mortgage adviser's monitor, and saw my outstanding mortgage term was given as 34 years and eight months.

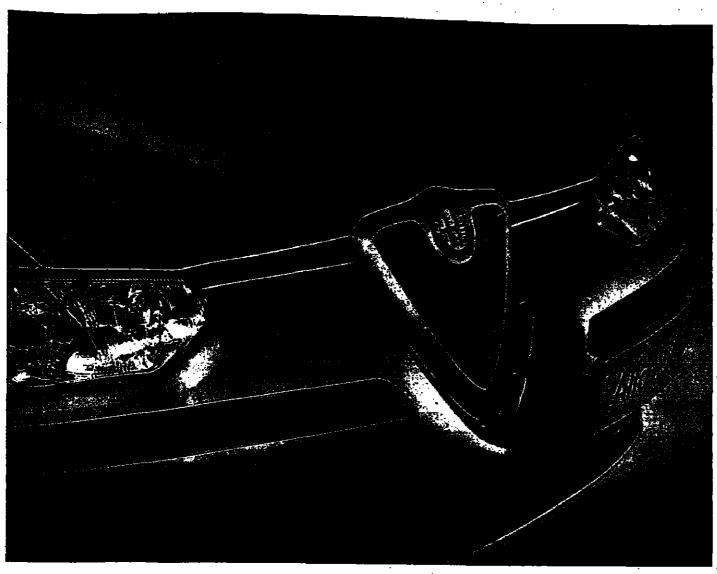
After six weeks of waiting, Abbey explained that although the contract had been for a 25-year repayment mortgage, they had set up the loan on an interest-only basis, with a 60-year term. They went on to admit: "This was identified in 1993, when the computer system re-calculated all extended terms to 35 years." At no time did I receive any notification of these changes, which had been carried out without my consent. Abbey National wrote: "It should have been clear that your outstanding balance was

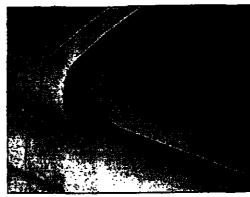
not decreasing as you expected." But with a repayment mortgage, I expected the first few years of monthly payments would mainly meet interest charges rather than capital repayment.

Abbey's end-of-year statements made no mention of type of mortgage, interest-rate changes, or outstanding term. I [complained and] was offered £326.63 against excess interest paid on the account, plus £500 towards the capital sum. Abbey wrote to me again in November this year, saying my case might take time to investigate, and asking me to suggest a figure for final compensation as part of an "experiment being carried out this

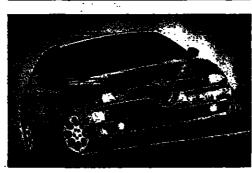
But I intend taking this case to the Banking Ombudsman, unless they re-instate my original mortgage. What worries me most is that all this only came to light by chance, and then my persistence in pursuing the matter. Finally. I am still awaiting

a full breakdown of my account details." Mr Williams' case is now being dealt with by Abbey National's secretariat, which has responsibility for investigating complaints in the final stage of the bank's complaint procedure. Ian Hart, manager of the secretariat, refuses to comment on the case but says the so-called experiment of asking complainants to suggest a compensation figure is standard practice and was not just "being carried out this month".









Don't just gaze upon it, drive it

The Car of the Year judges have judged - and this time the winner is not the usual dull but admirable utility vehicle but the Alfa 156, a gorgeouslooking, fine-driving, sensualsounding saloon from a noted maker of cars for hedonists. John Simister takes it for a ride.

The unusual object of the Car of the Year judges' adulation is a sleek, fourdoor saloon which replaces the Alfa 155 and, more important, aims to kidnap buyers away from 3-series BMWs and Audi A4s. Those cars are style and image statements of the highest degree, and that's just the status that the new Alfa Romeo is intended to emulate. Of course, Alfa Romeos have long been con- The tail is clean and crisp, the rear door or a 2.5-litre, 24-valve V6, but alsidered slightly exotic, with connotations handles are hidden black flaps in the of sportiness and sensuality, but while window corners so as not to distract the many car-lovers have been pleased to eye, the whole car looks lithe, dynamgaze upon the Alfas of others, they have not risked having one of their own. And though some of those details have a pair of vibration-cancelling balancer

Why was this? Too odd, too tem- a retro root, they are there to give sub- shafts, is a better bet. It has that crisp.

peramental, too ergonomically per- stance and pride to the car's personality. verse, too attention-seeking? All of not to give an excuse for a nostalgic walthese, in varying doses. The result was that the terrific warmth and goodwill that had long surrounded the Alfa idea has, in recent times, been wearing thin. True, in very recent times we've seen sparks of new life in the shape of the 145, the 146, the Spider and the GTV. but this time the fire is really burning.

Look at the 156's nose, that shieldshaped Alfa grille dipping into the bumper, flanked by horizontal "whiskers" just as in Alfas of the 1950s. See the front number-plate offset to the left, like it was on those Alfa Spiders of the 1960s and onwards. Then notice how the side profile rises towards the tail, how the flanks are unsullied by rubbing strakes, how the side crease fades into an anodised aluminium door handle and reasserts itself either side of it. ic, more organic than a sculpted Audi. valves, two spark plugs per cylinder and

low. This is a car for now.

Inside, too, the 156 feels special. It is more neatly designed, and more solidly assembled out of better-quality materials, than any Alfa Romeo I have encountered. And you can get properly comfortable in it, without stretching your arms or crowding your legs as used to be the Alfa way, and take in a racy set of dials buried at the far end of deep cowlings. Most of these dials are hidden from the front passenger - an Alfa driver is boss, you see - and a broad, angled centre console sweeping down from facia top to handbrake heightens the feeling of being in a sports car's cockpit.

To drive, it feels as it looks. British buyers will choose from three engines, four-cylinder units of 1.8 or 2.0 litres, though the V6 sounds the most melodic and gives you the most gears to play with (six), the 2.0-litre four, with 16

than the V6, oddly) and spins to high

speeds with gusto. The power reaches the road with spir- Alfa. 156 2.0 T.Spark 16V it but without drama, and the 156's cornering style is much the same. It grips hard, but reacts gently and precisely, as well as swiftly, to your inputs, making it possible to flow through bends in a highly satisfying way. Some cars react as though there is too much rubber in the various linkages between you and the wheels, but not this one. It feels much more machined and boned than that, yet it soaks up bumps without a shudder.

In short, this is an Alfa which looks as desirable as an Alfa Romeo should, and which brings you alive when you drive. Even better, it is well-made and detailed with care. There are snags - those unprotected sides will be vulnerable in car parks, the rear seat doesn't fold, the turning circle is poor - but the Alfa 156 is nevertheless that novel proposition, an Alfa which on a rational level is as tempting a prospect as a BMW or an Audi. And on an irrational level? Well, £18,795: Mechanically A4-like but with those looks, with that sound, that roomier and cheaper.

raspy eagerness typical of an Alfamotor, aura of zing and zest, it fires the soul. pulls strongly from low revs (more so It's been a while since a Car of the Year winner has done that.

> £19,500. Engine: 1,970cc, four cylinders, 16 yalves, 155bhp at 6,400rpm. Fivespeed gearbox, front-wheel drive. Performance: top speed I34mph, 0-60 in 8.4sec. Fuel consumption: 28-33mpg

Audi A4 1.8T, £21,881: Good-looking, beautifully made, quick and frugal, but less of an interactive driving experience. BMW 3231, £21.840: With the 320i's mysterious departure, there is no direct BMW rival for the I56 2.0. This one is faster, smoother, pricier. Peugeot 406 2.0T SRI, £17.885: Competes on power and poise if not the

Subaru Impreza Turbo, £19,110: Slightly smaller than Alfa, has huge pace, astounding four-wheel drive roadholding, cult-car character.

Volkswagen Passat 1.8T Sport SE.

MY WORST CAR/TONY DEMPSEY'S LAND ROVER DISCOVERY

could pack the children and dog into, that the faults were blamed on the make

niggles you come to expect with a new the engine. Well, it wasn't. The misfire car-various squeaks and rattles. Then and rattles continued and culminated we noticed that oil consumption was in a serious breakdown. high; we were pouring in a couple of

We chose the Discovery because we misfire. I remember them tinkering with wanted a large, robust vehicle which we some gaskets, but what shocked us was plus enjoy regular weekends away in the of unleaded petrol. We filled up with Cheshire countryside near our home. Total, but the garage used Burmah At first there were all the little which they insisted would be better for

MOTORING

We bought the Land Rover on 13 April litres a month. There were also rattles and piston wash, whatever that is, and 1994, which I hoped wasn't a bad omen. from the engine, and an annoying the only cure was a new engine. This was March 1995. The Discovery kept playing up. One bizarre way to restart it when it stalled was to stand on the bull bars and shake them vigorously. On one occasion my wife, who was

seven months pregnant, was going to pick me up from the centre of Manchester when the Discovery stopped in the middle of a box junction. A nice The diagnosis was a sticking valve chap in a Jaguar stopped to help. There

wasn't much chance of him shifting two aged to get two clients with major Distons of 4 x 4, but my wife managed to persuade him that gyrating on the bull bars would do the trick. It did.

All this led to a another new engine in December '96, and a gearbox that was increasingly difficult to use. That's the abridged version; the problems have think it's the best looking and most cappersisted and last week I was told an- able off-roader. We've just been very unother replacement engine is required. lucky. We may even buy another one.

We are now on gearbox number four. Ironically, as a solicitor I have mancovery problems, both brand new vehicles from Land Rover. But as mine was supplied under a contract hire agreement, negotiations have been more complicated. Even more ironically, this hasn't put us off the Discovery; we

Interview by James Ruppert

GAVIN GREEN

Roll over Mercedes; the Car of the Year's an Alfa

and the arts, there are no shortage of googs handed out in the car business. Numerous magazines have their "Car of the Year" prizes, and there are trophies for everything from best stereo system to dealer of the decade. But the prize the car industry wants most is European Car of the Year (Coty), and this year the surprise winner is the Alfa

Romeo 156. I say "surprise" not because I was one of the judges who failed to vote for it. (I judged it the second best new car of the year, after the new and staggeringly competent Volkswagen Golf.) Rather, it's rare for a sports saloon to win. Usually. mainstream family cars win Car of the Year, and the extra sales that go with it.

Fifty-six motoring journalists representing all major European countries vote in the Coty competition. They are usually specialist magazine writers, although there are some newspaper journalists. Each selects his or her top five new cars of the year and a short list of five cars is then determined. This year, the short list consisted of the Alfa, the Golf, the Mercedes A-class, the Audi A6 and the Citroen Xsara. The judges then vote from the short list, allocating 25 points across a minimum of four cars. Each judge must pick a clear winner. The Alfa won easily, gathering 454 points. Its nearest rival.

the Golf, collected 266. The Mercedes Aclass probably would have won, had it not rolled itself out of contention. It was during a Car of the Year test session that one or two of the Scandinavian judges first suspected the car of instability. One of the judges, from the Swedish magazine Teknikens Wärld, later carried out a "moose avoidance test", in which an A-class

As with other industries swerved violently without braking while loaded to the limit. The little A-class turned upside down, as (soon after) did the car's reputation.

Initially, I voted for the A-class, despite news that the Swedish magazine had rolled one. OK, it may be more inclined to tip in extreme manoeuvres than a conventional small hatch conditions that 99.9 per cent of motorists never encounter. But in a conventional front impact or side crash more likely in Britain than a rollover - it is probably miles safer than most small cars.

I changed my vote only after Mercedes, in a move probably inspired more by panic than logic, temporarily withdrew it from sale. If its maker had lost confidence in it, why should I support it?

The anti-A-class momentum among Coty members helped the Alfa. It is a car of completely different character. The A-class is futuristic and will be widely copied. That is why - even if it lost the Coty prize - it will be remembered as the most important car of the year. The 156, on the other hand, is a car of great emotional appeal - like all great Alfas. It looks fabulous and drives brilliantly. But, optional hi-tech diesel engine excepted, the 156 is not a landmark in the history of motoring, even if it is a significant car in the recent history of Alfa.

Instead, the Coty jury, unusually this year, voted with their hearts. When I discovered that the 156 had won, I was delighted. Hang its "big picture" relevance. Here is a car that makes you feel good about driving and about cars. Here is a gorgeous piece of finde-siècle industrial design. Here is a car that buyers will love owning and show off with pride to friends. Here, in short, is a worthy car of the year.

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Psst! Interested in buying a Z car?

Old police cars don't die, they just plod on and on. When the sirens stop wailing, and the blue light spins for the last time, for the canny used car buyer a retired police car can represent excellent value for money, writes James Ruppert.

Cop cars lead a brutally hard life, from stop-start beat work to high performance pursuit, but once off shift they receive the lice Vehicle Maintenance System. Buying one is an opportunity to buy a one-owner, well serviced car at a low price.

typical ex-police car. At the traffic police end, there are Ford and electric windows. Granadas, Vauxhall Senators and Rover 800s. There are also and Sierra 4 x 4s, and, on the stolen and recovered). panda beat, reliable old plodders such as Escorts, Metros and Astras, A lot of forces, such as tween 80,000 and 100,000 miles. the City of London, have used Probably the most disappoint-



Blue chip investment: pandas have always been lovingly maintained

BMWs; others have dabbled with Saabs and Alfa Romeos. Most cars have manual gearboxes, though the Metropolitan

undivided attentions of the Po- Traffic division are predominantly automatic. Model inscriptions are removed; central locking usually remains, although most forces disconnect There is no such thing as the it. Luxury cars may lose their wooden dashboard trimmings

Plain clothes cars may have been bought second hand, or ac-Jaguar XJ6s. Range Rovers quired by the force (sometimes

In simple terms, what you get is a car that has covered be-

ing aspect is that you don't get any of the cop car kit. Off come the police decals and "flowerpots" (beacons) and out come the radios. Sometimes this can leave a mess. But traffic cars in particular often use removable gantries for the beacons. As for the decals, a good

valet can usually remove the adhesive - and in any case white is an easy colour to work with.

The upholstery on most cars is surprisingly hard wearing, though front seats can get shabby, and Pandas are likely to carry rear seat passengers, not all of whom go quictly.

The cars are serviced before sale and whatever needs re- Rex Adair: 01736 76.323

placing will be replaced - including gearboxes and engines. Records will have been kept but they won't necessarily tome with the car.

Police cars are not sold dir. ect to the public; they go to auction. Prices hover around apper cent of the normal trade price. Phone around to find what cars are going to be at which audion.

If you don't want to isk bidding at auction, try an cr-public service vehicle specialist such as Rex Adair, in Comwali. But whatever ex-police car you choose, may the furce be

with you.